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AUTHOR Weldy, Gilbert R., Ed.
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ABSTRACT

This demonstration project sought, over a period of 3 years, to improve students' school achievement by strengthening the transitions that students make during their years of schooling K-13. These troublesome transition points, generally acknowledged to be home to school, elementary to middle school or junior high, middle level school to high school, and high school to college or career, are fraught with hurdles and stumbling blocks for many students. Students become anxious and distraught over the uncertainties of abrupt changes in buildings, teachers, classmates, and programs. Such needless anxiety and apprehension interferes with learning and impairs confidence and self-esteem. Students making transitions need information, support, and guidance, and should receive it from a variety of sources. The seven demonstration centers have devised and implemented dozens of programs to strengthen school transitions for students K-13. All of these efforts have been in the interest of improving student achievement. This document presents the experiences and findings of each project. Each section includes the recommendations which have grown out of the experiences in the demonstration centers. Although there were plans developed to assess the results of project efforts, there were no experimental programs that could be compared in a systematic way with control programs. Nevertheless, this final report describes what was changed and improved in these schools. The appendixes provide information about the development of the project and the demonstration centers, as well as sample center materials. (LLL)

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Stronger School Transitions Improve Student Achievement

A Final Report on a Three-Year Demonstration Project "Strengthening School Transitions for Students K-13"

CG023806

Sponsored by the
National Association of Secondary School Principals
in cooperation with the
American Association of Collegiate Registrars
and Admissions Officers
and the
National Association of College Admissions Counselors

Funded by
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STRONGER SCHOOL TRANSITIONS IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A
Final Report on a Three Year
Demonstration Project
"Strengthening School Transitions for Students K-13"

Sponsored by the National Association of Secondary Schools

In Cooperation with the

American Association of Collegiate Registrars
and Admissions Officers
and

The National Association of College Admissions Counselors

Funded by

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New York, New York

Edited by Gilbert R. Weldy
National Project Director
School of Education
Indiana University
Bloomington, Indiana

Principal Writer

Gilbert R. Weldy, National Project Director

Contributing Writers*

Edith Belden, Principal, Central Gwinnett High School, Gwinnett County Public Schools; Lawrenceville, Georgia

Mary Diez, Chairperson, Education Department, Alverno College; Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Pamela Fay, Director of Studies, St. Catherine's School; Richmond, Virginia

Zenobia Jones, Counselor and Curriculum Coordinator; Okmulgee, Oklahoma

Mary Louise Labrucherie, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services; Chino, California

Ellen Landess, Coordinator of Mathematics, School District of Kansas City; Kansas City, Missouri

Charles Napoli, Principal, Keene High School; Keene, New Hampshire

Betty Poindexter, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Metropolitan School District of Warren Township; Indianapolis, Indiana

John Shinpoch, Principal, Okmulgee High School; Okmulgee, Oklahoma

Burris Smith, Director of Instruction, K-12, School District of the City of Saginaw; Saginaw, Michigan

Sandra Webb, Lead Teacher, Dyer Elementary School, Gwinnett County Public Schools; Lawrenceville, Georgia

Note: Contact persons for each demonstration center are shown in Appendix A

*Identified in the positions that they held at the time of the project

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I. INTRODUCTION

> Moving from high school to college or work involves choices for which most students are not well prepared. Some wander about almost aimlessly. Others are put on tracks that may be inappropriate and that close off future options. Schooling should prepare all students for a life of work and learning. This means solid grounding in the basic skills, or common core of learning, a cluster of elective courses, and student assessment and counseling to smooth the transition to jobs and higher education.[1]

Life for all of us is a series of transitions. We grow from childhood into adolescence and on into adulthood. We move from our parents' home to independent living. We change from single life to marriage. We move on from school to careers and work. We change careers. Most of us make these transitions easily and happily, but many of these transitions are trying and traumatic and result in unhappiness and failure.

Students in our schools must make some very critical transitions as well. They move from the secure comfort of the home and the familiarity of their parents to the strange and wonderful world of school. They move through the transition of part-day school to full-day school. They move from one building to another. They may move to strange new communities. They move from self-contained classes where they are nurtured by one teacher to the departmentalized school where their day is scheduled in different classrooms with different teachers. Each succeeding level is more demanding, more rigorous, and more complex. The transition to post-secondary school or work is the ultimate challenge, for both students and their parents. Too often programs on either side of these transitional points are not well articulated - not even connected. Schools across the country can attest that students making these transitions from one level of schooling to another experience a range of emotions from mild uncertainty and frustration to major anxiety and academic failure.

All students need assistance and support in making these transitions. Without support and guidance, some students flounder and fail and drop out. School achievement is adversely affected when school programs are not strongly connected with well-articulated curriculum, two-way communication, and guidance and administrative provisions for smooth transitions. Many of

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[1] High School, A Report on Secondary Education in America. Ernest Boyer, 1983.

the current reform reports and the educational critics have pointed at the schools' failure to provide strong school transitions, resulting in poor achievement and poor social adjustment. These transition problems and issues were defined for the purposes of this demonstration project as follows:

1. Expectations and standards at each level of schooling (K-13) are not clearly communicated and understood by the lower level sending school. The curricula of the schools at each level are not connected in terms of content and skills. Continuity of learning is lacking.

2. When expectations and standards are defined, they are too often defined by courses completed, credits earned, or time spent rather than by knowledge of content, mastery of concepts, or development of skills. Standards are quantitative rather than qualitative.

3. There has been far too little communication and collaboration between and among classroom teachers, curriculum supervisors, and the counselors at the various levels of schooling, particularly in the area of curriculum content.

4. "Social promotion" from one level of schooling to another has caused the need at each succeeding level to provide remedial instruction for students who have not mastered knowledge and skills needed to succeed at the next level.

5. Schools at higher levels seldom communicate or feed back data to the lower level sending schools concerning the achievement of students at the higher level. Schools at the lower levels do not receive definitive assessment data on how well their students are prepared for the next level.

6. Enrollments in academic subjects have declined in the high school preparation, although in recent years, students and parents have begun to respond to the various reform reports and state mandates by enrolling in more English, foreign language, mathematics, and science.

7. Overall evaluation of schools is too often done by input measures rather than by student outcomes.

8. Students' scores in college-qualifying tests have been declining steadily for approximately 15 years, although the scores have leveled in the last two years.

9. College admissions standards are not always clearly communicated to the high schools, and selection procedures in many highly selective schools are not clearly understood. Standards too often do not specify actual high school courses to

be taken, nor do they specify knowledge and skills needed for success in college.

10. Some colleges are compromising their admissions standards in order to maintain enrollment in a period of declining numbers of high school graduates (25% drop from 1979 to 1991). At the same time, some colleges are raising admissions standards (sometimes arbitrarily) in response to the national reform reports or state mandates.

11. "Open admission" policies, particularly in the public junior and community colleges, have not encouraged, let alone required, students to take a college preparatory program with the desirable rigor. Students have a tendency to prepare only for the standard that they believe is required or expected of them.

12. College entrance requirements have for many years had a significant influence on the high school curriculum and on the courses students and parents select whether they plan college or not.

13. There is widespread concern over the misuse, misunderstanding, and misinterpretation of aptitude and achievement testing.

In addressing these issues the project participants determined to "improve student achievement and performance at all levels of schooling by strengthening all means of articulation in curriculum and student progress from one level to another from Kindergarten to College (K-13)."

This three-year demonstration project used seven school districts representing a variety of schools and communities. These demonstration sites are described in Appendix A. Also the genesis of the project, the sponsoring associations, the Foundation funding it, and the modus operandi of the project are described in the appendices.

The Final Report

This final report is a compilation of the efforts made in the demonstration centers, diverse to be sure, but nonetheless designed to improve and strengthen specific areas of the transition process. The experience in each center has been merged with what was done in other centers. Each section includes the recommendations which have grown out of the experiences in the demonstration centers, 56 recommendations in all.

Participants are very mindful of the shortcomings of a project of this sort: that many hoped-for outcomes are not apparent or obvious within the time frame of the project and that

many objectives are not measurable with hard research data. Although there were plans developed to assess the results of project efforts, there were no experimental programs that could be compared in a systematic way with control programs. Nevertheless, the final report describes what was changed and improved in these schools. The expert opinion and judgment of those involved has been cited to substantiate what the effects of the project efforts have been.

Planners of this project chose not to use the common educational term "articulation" because of the possible confusion of this school process with its other meanings. The term "transitions" describes more fully what the project goals intend. "Transitions" in this report is used as a broader term than "articulation." The terms are not used interchangeably. School programs, particularly curricula, are articulated. Students make transitions. This project has focused on the students as they make these troublesome transitions.

II. BASIC ELEMENTS FOR STRENGTHENING TRANSITIONS

> Looking only at high schools is distorting. The students come from somewhere--home, elementary and middle schools--and are going somewhere--to work, to college, to an independent life. Reference to these worlds before and after high school remains implicit in our work; we trust that the reader appreciates the importance of these words.[2]

A. WHERE ARE THE CRITICAL TRANSITION POINTS?

Schools are organized by age groups, with units defined to serve these specific groups. Specific, descriptive terms are used to identify these separate, distinctive schools: pre-school, elementary school, middle school, junior high school, high school (or even "senior" high school), community or junior college, and college or university. These designations are useful, but when each level develops its own teacher training and licensing, administrative certification, and professional association, the separation is magnified, making the transitions for students more difficult. Too often the school faculties and administrators do not acknowledge the relationships among all the levels and fail to plan programs and activities that would link all levels together into a coherent system. Students may be the only ones who see the system as a continuous whole, because they are the only ones who move through it all.

Teachers can become isolated and focus on their "grade" or "subject area" without recognizing the connection that their year or subject area has with all of their students' other school experiences. Students can easily see their educational experiences as a series of totally unrelated events with no connection between one year and the next.

Schools in this project began their work to strengthen transitions by identifying the points when transitions appeared to be the most troublesome. At the same time, they recognized that all students make these transitions, and that the issue is a system-wide one and should involve all school-related personnel. Project participants were easily able to develop some fairly obvious criteria for identifying troublesome transition points:

1. Students leaving home to begin school

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[2] Horace's Compromise, The Dilemma of the American High School. Theodore Sizer, 1984.

2. Students moving from part-day kindergarten or pre-school programs to full-day primary school

3. Students moving from primary to upper elementary grades where teaching techniques and expectations change

4. Students changing from self-contained classes to departmentalized classes

5. Students changing school buildings

6. Students moving to a school level where the philosophical approach or instructional process is different

7. Students leaving secondary school and moving to independent college life or work away from home

8. Students moving from one community to another

When these changes occur in combination, as would be the case for a student moving from elementary school to middle or junior high school, the transition problems are multiplied. In this case, the student is probably changing buildings, encountering different expectations for learning, and moving from self-contained to departmentalized classes. In addition the school is larger and the organization and schedule are more complex.

If schools do not easily identify these critical transition points, they might look for this kind of evidence that students are having transition problems:

1. Poor attendance

2. Increased discipline problems

3. Failing grades

4. Inability to match expectations of the new level

5. Complaints from students and/or their parents

6. Lack of an articulated curriculum between levels

7. Lack of communication across levels

Students can be helpful in identifying where the transitions are most difficult. When eighth grade students, anticipating high school at Central Gwinnett High School in Georgia, were asked what their greatest fears and apprehensions were, they responded (1) getting lost (2) changing classes and (3) becoming

a freshman. Such information, furnished by students, can help schools anticipate what students truly fear when they make transitions such as from eighth grade to high school.

These critical transition points may differ from one school district to another depending on organization and facilities. Each district will determine at which point students will encounter the greatest transition problems. In this project, all the demonstration centers focused on the elementary to middle/junior high school transition, the junior high to high school and the high school to college or work. In addition some identified the transition from kindergarten to first grade and from second grade to third as additional critical transition points.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Each school district should establish a process and a set of criteria for identifying the critical transition points in the school continuum, the process to involve students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents.

> Elementary schools and the secondary school which graduates of the former probably will attend exist in virtual isolation from each other. Three schools... in our sample sharing a common site might just as well have been in different towns, given the lack of communication and articulation among them... Continuities and discontinuities in the progression were not on the agenda for the three principals.[3]

B. LEVELS OF STAFF RESPONSIBILITY K-13

Strong transition programs don't just happen. They are planned, scheduled, and implemented by specified, responsible persons at all levels. When transition programs are left to chance, without direction or coordination, there may be transition points where reasonably good activities are going on, but there is no guarantee that they will continue or that they will be linked with other activities that strengthen transitions. Leaving transitions to the desires and interests of each grade level, subject area, or school level will most certainly leave it inconsistent, uncoordinated and weak.

Strong transition programs will develop only if the responsibility for them is carefully assigned and delineated for the appropriate staff members. The levels of responsibility and accountability would begin with the following:

Boards of Education should have policies which clearly state the importance of strong transitions throughout the levels for which they are responsible. Policies should reflect values of the parents and community at large. Their policy might even designate their chief executive officer as having overall responsibility for transitions. The district's budget should provide funds for personnel to implement their policy, for inservice programs for staff, for materials, and for released time for teachers involved in transition activities.

Central Office Personnel should have overall responsibility for planning and implementing a transition program in large school districts.

Building Administrators, beginning with the principal, must carry major responsibility for gathering information, communicating with "connected" schools, and scheduling and implementing the program. The principal may delegate these building responsibilities to assistant principals and/or guidance counselors.

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[3]Goodlad, John, A Place Called School, McGraw-Hill, NY, 1984, p. 304.

Guidance Counselors are integral parts of the transition process. They hold records of student achievement which move with students from school to school. They assist new students in their orientation to a new level of schooling. They advise all students on the decisions they make at significant transition points. They guide many at-risk students through troublesome transition points. They confer with parents when students make transitions. Finally, they guide students and help them prepare for the transition to post-secondary school activities and frequently are key people in following-up on graduates after their "final" transition. The seven project school directors and the project staff spent considerable time discussing the role of the guidance counselor in the transition process. Pamela Fay, past President of the National Association of College Admission Counselors, one of the cooperating professional associations in this project, served as a project consultant and assisted in developing these guidelines for defining the role and responsibilities of guidance counselors:

1. A transitional guidance program shall be provided by each elementary school, middle level school, secondary school, occupational/vocational school and post-secondary school participating in the project.

2. The responsibilities listed below shall be included in each school's transitional guidance program and may be fulfilled in a variety of ways.

3. Recognizing that some elements of the transitional guidance program may require advanced and/or specialized training, the direction for the school program should be given by a professionally trained counselor. Responsibility for the program within the school may be assumed by a professional educator who has appropriate training, such as the school counselor, the assistant principal or another professional designated by the school principal.

4. In school situations where there is no appropriately trained professional educator, a professionally trained counselor should give inservice workshops to those involved in the program.

5. The responsibilities of the counselor in the "sending" school shall be:

   a. to communicate with the "receiving" schools student progress, learning needs, strengths and/or gaps and deficiencies, and readiness to move to the next level, as identified by the faculty;
   b. to use appropriate assessment procedures to evaluate student progress, learning needs, strengths and/or

gaps and deficiencies, and readiness to move to the next level;
c. to identify and to deal with social/emotional deterrents to student progress;
d. to prepare students to succeed at higher level "receiving" schools by understanding and teaching those academic and study skills needed for survival;
e. to communicate to parents student progress, learning needs, strengths and/or gaps and deficiencies, readiness to move to the next level, and survival skills needed by students to succeed at schools at the next level.

6. The responsibilities of the counselor at the "receiving" school shall be:

a. to communicate to the "sending" schools the academic and study skills needed to succeed at the "receiving" school, as defined by the faculty at the "receiving" school;
b. to communicate to the "sending" schools the social, survival and thriving skills needed at the "receiving" school;
c. to identify and to implement procedures for placing students effectively;
d. to identify students who need remediation, acceleration, or enrichment;
e. to use appropriate assessment procedures to evaluate student progress, learning needs, strengths and/or gaps and deficiencies;
f. to communicate to the "sending" schools progress, strengths and/or gaps and deficiencies of students "sent," as identified by the faculty at the "receiving" school.

7. In middle level schools, secondary schools, occupational/vocational schools and colleges, transitional guidance programs will serve both "sending" and "receiving" functions.

Curriculum supervisor, coordinators, and department chairpersons hold major responsibility for guaranteeing that students progress through a logical continuum of learning in each subject area. Curriculum planning which leads to agreement about what should be taught and what students should achieve at each grade or level should be carried out under building and system supervision. The responsibility for an assessment plan to monitor student progress also lies there.

Classroom teachers are expected to be involved in the design of the curriculum to be presented at each level of schooling. They then can be held accountable to use methods and develop

materials that accomplish these curriculum objectives for students. They further can be expected to develop assessment tools to measure and monitor student progress in their subject areas, and to use the results to improve their methodology.

College admissions officers and other personnel are involved, not only in the decision of who is admitted to their schools, but also in providing orientation activities to assure that incoming students will make a successful transition to the demands of college life and study. They should also be expected to provide useful information back to the sending secondary schools to help them in preparing students for their college experience. College academic deans, department chairs, academic advisors and professors of the connected disciplines have similar responsibilities.

All of the responsibilities for transition activities should be in the job descriptions of those persons who will be held accountable for them. The usual hierarchy of supervision would apply for these responsibilities as it does for all duties. For example, in the Science K-12 Coordinator's position description in Warren Township, Indiana, the coordinator has these "skills, knowledge, and abilities" relating to student transitions and curriculum articulation: To smooth the transition for students via curriculum articulation and teacher expectation from one level to another."

Included in the "primary function" statement, the science coordinator will "... coordinate the science curriculum from kindergarten through the senior year of high school and provide a smooth transition to level 13 for college-bound students." Among the many "duties and responsibilities" is this one: "To align and articulate the science curriculum and provide smooth transition for students."

The chart which follows will give an over-all view of where responsibilities could be placed for all programs and services related to student transitions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Responsibilities for all aspects of the transition program should be clearly defined and assigned to appropriate professional staff. Such responsibilities should be contained in the respective job descriptions with clear line accountability.

2. Strong consideration should be given to appointing a professional staff member, preferably a counselor, to serve as a "transition counselor" to coordinate all transition-related programs at the building level.

Responsibilities Related to Transitions

Personnel Assigned to Each Responsibility	Policies	Budget	Delegation of Duties	Curriculum Planning and Instruction	Personal and Educational Guidance	Interpretation of Achievement Information	Orientation Activities	Exchange of Information Feed-forward and Back	Assessment of Achievement	Inservices Staff Development	Preparation of Publication Materials
Board of Education	X	X									
Superintendent		X	X								
Supervisors District Level and Coordinators			X	X		X			X	X	X
Building Level Principals and Assistants			X	X			X	X		X	X
Department Chairpersons				X		X		X	X	X	
Guidance Counselors					X	X	X				X
Classroom Teachers				X	X			X	X		
College Admissions Officers					X	X	X	X			X
College-Level Academic Personnel				X	X			X	X	X	

> If teachers talked more with each other about both education and students, the chances for productive exchange about the effects of their efforts on students would increase. They could begin to discuss curriculum in its proper context: what students should know and be able to do at the end of high school.[4]

C. THE FOUR C'S REQUIRED FOR STRONG TRANSITIONS COMMUNICATION, COOPERATION, CONSENSUS, COMMITMENT)

The "Four C's" which are cited here are much more than a convenient, clever acronym. They truly stand at the very foundation of any success this project has had. Repeatedly, project participants have described their excitement and their satisfaction in communicating with their colleagues on subjects that were so closely associated with their professional interests and objectives. Being able to communicate with colleagues across the K-13 spectrum was unprecedented for teachers in most of the project schools. How often have elementary teachers met with college professors to discuss what students should know and be able to do at each level of their schooling? The goals of this project required intensive communication across all the levels K-13.

It would be trite to say that communication was the key to the objectives of this project, but it would be inaccurate and dishonest to say otherwise. The planning and the activities of this project required extensive communication. From the beginning, project centers called upon their professional staffs, their parents, and their students to contribute their very best thinking on how student achievement could be improved by strengthening transitions. The participants responded with their time, their enthusiasm, their energy, and their ideas. Their motivation was professional, grounded in their interest in what was needed to make their students successful.

The participation, the communication, in this project has been unusually deep and broad. During one semester of the project, 90 percent of the staff in Warren Township was involved in discussions to improve curriculum articulation. In Chino, California, 624 participants including teachers, parents, business people and the military wrestled with the issues of curriculum planning and articulation. In the second year of the project, 300 teachers in the Saginaw, Michigan, schools were

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[4] The Shopping Mall High School: Winners and Losers in the Educational Marketplace. Arthur G. Powell, Eleanor Farrar and David K. Cohen, 1985

involved with the director of instruction and subject area coordinators in aligning curriculum.

Gwinnett County, Georgia, which involved only one high school attendance area in the project, formed seven committees to insure the broad-based communication that was necessary to achieve their goals. The committees which included representative from elementary to college levels met on five occasions during the first 24 months of the project, first separately then together to share their thinking. After visitations across levels, teachers developed such close collegial relationships that they arrived in advance of the meeting times for lunch together.

Keene, New Hampshire, in collaboration with its neighboring districts, made transition issues a major agenda item in each of its K-12 curriculum meetings and grade level meetings. Together they identified and studied problems that students encountered in making transitions. It was in these meetings that Keene teachers developed the transition programs that are described throughout this report.

The first "C" for communication was the key, but it was only the first step. There were important "C" elements that go considerably beyond the rudimentary step of bringing people together to communicate. The communication in this project was made possible by the Cooperation among all the school boards, administrators, teachers and counselors (and their unions!), students, and college and community representatives. Without this cooperation, nothing could have been accomplished. All of those involved in the process who would eventually be affected by the decisions made were needed in this collaborative effort.

Communication and cooperation were still not enough to accomplish the project's objectives. The communication had to lead to Consensus on what should be changed, how and when changes would be implemented, and who would be responsible. The communication would be fruitless if their was no agreement among the participants. No action could result. Consensus was not difficult to achieve when participants were engaged in a cooperative enterprise with goals clear and obtainable.

Finally, the first three C's had to result in Commitment - to carry out decisions and plans that were mutually agreed upon. This commitment had to come from all parties involved if the process was to succeed. Every level in the transition process had to keep its promises, follow through and act. The chain of student progress through our schools is no stronger than the weakest link, so all levels had to be held accountable.

Some would call this process "participatory management." Others say it is "grass roots democracy" or "shared decision

making." Still others may see it as "teacher empowerment." Others see it as creating a sound climate for managing change. Participants in this project could characterize their experience over the three-year period in any of these ways.

Certain key elements had to be present to make this process succeed:

1. Participation was broad based, involving all those who would be affected by decisions made and would be responsible for implementing the ideas and plans.

2. "Grass roots" participants were fully involved from the beginning of the project. There were no secret agendas, pre-conceived ideas or management directives.

3. The goals of the project were specific and clear. They were reasonable to reach and within the power of the participants to plan and implement.

4. Time for the project work was found in a variety of ways: All demonstration centers released some teaching time for committee work during the school day, however, most of the professional work was done beyond the school day in after-school, evening, weekend and summer meetings.

5. The primary incentive for the project work, particularly for the professional staffs, came from the inherent desire of teachers, counselors, and administrators to improve education for their students. They were able to see from the beginning that good things were possible through the goals of the project.

6. More tangible incentives for this work were meals and refreshments at meetings, attendance at related professional meetings, travel to national project meetings, and the recognition and visibility of being a part of a national demonstration project. In a very few cases, professional staff members were paid a modest stipend for intensive, long-term curriculum work. Project "seed money" allocated annually to each center made a limited number of these amenities possible.

7. Meetings of project participants were highly structured and well planned. Agendas were set and necessary background information was available, making it possible for meeting time to be maximally productive.

8. The demonstration schools had an identity with a nationally recognized need frequently mentioned in the reform reports, and had the assistance and support from six other demonstration site participants, the project's consultants, and the national project director.

Warren township recognized the tremendous potential for growth in their schools when they set up a communication decision-making model to facilitate the district's work toward common goals. They enlisted virtually every staff member at every level, set meeting times and dates, and established clear agendas, all to insure that meaningful interaction would take place. Keys to Warren Township's success with this model were the following:

1. Open access to information so that all participants could contribute from an equal knowledge base.

2. Setting of meeting times at different times during the school day, early mornings, evenings, and summer.

3. Clear definition of the task, who is involved and why, and limits of the authority to make decisions.

4. Discretionary funds for research and experimentation.

5. Development of goal interdependence - making all participants responsible for the quality of decisions.

6. Making overt attempts to make authority and responsibility companions - empowering teachers to be involved in decisions beyond their classrooms.

7. Use of "forced-field analysis" in goal setting and the subsequent development of action plans.

8. Building new programs on what is already in place and successful - not "re-inventing the wheel" as though nothing good had been done before.

One of the Warren teachers said, "Participants need a feeling of 'power.' It came with this group. What we were doing really made a difference. Now we all have an investment in what happens." Another teacher described his experience, "One of the greatest challenges of my career has been participating with this group."

The Chino, California, demonstration center carried out an even more extensive employment of the four C's by their involvement of parents, private business, higher education, and the U.S. military. The Board of Education provided support and incentives with the assignment of six curriculum coordinators and stipends for teachers for summer work.

What happens when students make the critical transitions from one level to another cannot be ignored and left to chance. Communication, cooperation, consensus, and commitment are

absolutely essential to strengthen school transitions for students.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Schools embarking on improvement projects should establish models and guidelines which build in the key 4 C's, communication, cooperation, consensus and commitment, attending to the following elements:

   a. Participation by appropriate, empowered people.
   b. Clear and specific statement of goals, reasonable and reachable, and worthy of the time and effort to be expended.
   c. Open agendas, concise and structured, with nothing hidden or pre-determined.
   d. Convenient meeting times which do not infringe on participants' other duties and responsibilities.
   e. Incentives in the form of released time, recognition, amenities, limited compensation, and professional rewards.
   f. Principles of good group process and decision making.

III. CURRICULUM PLANNING K-13: THE KEY TO STRONG TRANSITIONS

> Need is continuous, sustained attention to ways of creating organized curricula to assure balance for each student in his or her progression through the levels of schooling . . . Tasks including developing exemplary programs for schools of varying sizes, developing assessment systems to be used by the individual schools in developing current curricular excesses and shortcomings, and developing techniques for assessing and grading the program of each student.[5]

A. HOW AN ARTICULATED CURRICULUM IMPROVES STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

No other reform has received more lip service and statements of good intentions than this glaring and obvious need to provide students with learning experiences which are logical, continuous and sequential. This project has demonstrated that these are not just "buzz words" to be used as "pie-in-the-sky" objectives by well-meaning educational reformers.

All demonstration centers have engaged their professional staffs in curriculum planning and design that can serve as a model for schools that wish to improve curriculum articulation.

Keene, New Hampshire, has developed a "skills continuum" in all curriculum areas and is developing computerized record keeping to track students' progress. Okmulgee, Oklahoma has a curriculum guide for language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies with "must, should and optional" goals. Chino, California has involved representatives from every school site in developing curriculum guides in five subject areas. Warren Township in Indiana has concentrated on mathematics and science and has planned curriculum objectives and assessment tools for all levels in these subjects. Kansas City, Missouri has a coordinated mathematics program with a strong connection with local colleges. Saginaw, Michigan has contracts with local colleges for an integrated, articulated curriculum in 12 vocational areas. Gwinnett County, Georgia has developed a GEMS program (Gwinnett Educational Management System) in mathematics. Language arts, science and social studies are next. The program is computer managed and monitors the acquisition of students' concepts and skills throughout their school years.

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[5] A Place Called School. John Goodlad, 1984.

All of these models will be described in detail in this section of the report. There are similarities in the concepts and designs in each of these centers because all were working toward the same objectives. There are also some striking differences, because each plan was developed independently by different professional staffs for different populations in different communities. The uniqueness of each model will hopefully furnish ideas for any school district that would choose to improve curriculum articulation.

Rationale for an Articulated Curriculum

How often have we heard students complain, "Why are we studying this; we had it last year?" Or just as often, the teacher laments, "You students should know how to do this. You should have learned it last year!" When teachers from different levels are brought together on "institute" or "inservice" days for a few hours to consider "articulation" in their subject areas, too often the discussions degenerate to criticism and fault-finding. Feelings are hurt and egos bruised when teachers at one level charge that the students they received were not well prepared by the previous level in basic skills and knowledge. If the complaints go public, as has been the case in recent years when colleges and universities have been so critical of secondary schools, the ill feelings mount, and professionals become demoralized and defensive.

Too often, these "one-shots" and "pot-shots" at each other have accomplished nothing. We have not held the attention of teachers and curriculum planners long enough to focus on what the problems are and where they really lie. Annual "articulation meetings" (the "one-shot" approach), poorly planned and loosely conducted, send teachers back to their classrooms with no firm agreements or understanding of what is to be taught, when, and how. The result is that gaps and deficiencies remain, or duplication and overlaps continue.

The "pot-shots" that have come from one level to the next lower level, claiming poor preparation and readiness by students making the transition, have accomplished little except to irritate and anger. These accusations are ages old and have usually missed their mark, or the target has not been listening. Kindergarten teachers blame parents. Lower elementary teachers blame the kindergarten. Upper elementary teachers blame the primary teachers--and so it goes on up the line, a very familiar complaint to all of us in education.

This project, using seven demonstration school districts, has found ways to address these shortcomings. It has not been easy. It has taken three years with many, many hours of professional time, most of it voluntary and outside of regular school hours. Section IIC of this final report describes the

process that teachers and curriculum supervisors found to accomplish this task. Subject area specialists (teachers and supervisors) came together to confer and concur on essential curriculum in the subject areas targeted for this project. They outlined the following goals:

1. Determine what students should know and be able to do at each level of schooling

2. Spell out specific instructional objectives to be met at each level

3. Agree on content to be mastered and instructional materials to be used

4. Design assessment models to measure the level of skill development and content mastery

5. Set standards for achievement to use as a basis for remediation, promotion, retention, and acceleration

The Role of Assessment of Student Learning

In addition to the difficult professional judgments which teachers made in setting curriculum goals for their content areas at each grade level, they at the same time needed to determine how they would know when students had mastered the content or skills and could move on. This called for development of assessment tools to measure student achievement at each level in each subject area. Therefore, assessment became a very central issue in this project as a means of improving student achievement by strengthening the transitions.

Understanding of how ongoing assessment is part of the teaching process is integral to effective articulation. "Assessment" differs from what we have traditionally called "testing" and "program evaluation." While these terms are used almost interchangeably in the national discussion about school effectiveness, there are important differences among them on the conceptual level, especially as those differences affect communication across grade levels within a school district. "Testing" as we have come to know it, is focused on content; the item of analysis is the individual test item. Most often it is used for selection or placement, and it is diagnostic--prescriptive only in a general sense. Quite often it comes at a time when the teacher is unable to make use of the information to provide for intervention in student learning.

"Assessment" as defined for the participants in this project, concerns the progress of an individual student. Because of the focus on the individual, the item of analysis becomes the

individual's performance, with clear identification of strengths and weaknesses in relation to the expectations or outcomes for the grade level. Having its etymological root in an old Latin word that means "to sit down beside," assessment calls for a careful examination of each individual's work by the teacher, with the relationship of teacher to student being more of "guide" and "coach" than "judge." Recognizing this distinction, the goals of this "Educational Connections Project" specified a need to "define student achievement in terms of qualitative standards rather than quantitative measures."

The impact of the distinction between testing and assessment was apparent in several of the demonstration centers. Because many of the centers spelled out the scope and sequence of knowledge and performance early in the project, they discovered that objective testing might deal with some of the "knowledge goals," but that new and different assessment methods were needed to measure performance and skills.

A Chino, California curriculum coordinator, reflecting on the project, describes her awareness of the need for different kinds of assessments:

> As I have moved further into the idea of assessment I have become increasingly concerned that an objective, paper pencil, criterion-referenced assessment is <u>not</u> what needs to happen to ensure implementation of our curricular goals. For one thing, a pencil and paper test of content as the only assessment device belies our stated philosophical position advocating an integrated, process-dominant, activity-oriented, hands-on core curriculum. I fear that we are in danger of falling victim to "hyperrationality." This occurs when intentions to increase efficiency, effectiveness and accountability are imposed on schools without changing existing procedures...(Our new curricula) not only demand new and broader content, but new methodology, new concepts of classroom organization, a modified definition of teacher and student roles, new concepts of grouping, and new emphases in instruction. The focus of instruction has shifted from product (content) as an end in itself to content as a vehicle for teaching learning processes. The emphasis of instruction therefore shifts from <u>what</u> students learn to <u>how</u> students learn...

She goes on to describe in detail how the assessment processes appropriate for such learning goals need to focus on the students' <u>demonstration</u> of the processes of learning. "If you get learners to produce something with knowledge, you're on the way to higher level thinking," she added.

Chino, California made important progress in creating the kinds of assessments the coordinator quoted above identified as essential. For example, Chino's foreign language teachers worked with faculty from the University of California-Riverside and California State University Fullerton to field test assessments in German, French, and Spanish that called forth the contextual knowledge of students, giving teachers feedback on their ability to apply their knowledge in realistic situations.

In the Warren Township, Indiana center, there was support from state initiatives that led to the exploration of different kinds of assessment instruments. The ISTEP program of the State of Indiana, while it includes some objective testing, calls for the assessment of the process skills common to the sciences in "real life" problem-solving applications.

The idea that assessment is "sitting down beside" the student showed up in other assessment plans. Feedback directed at student development became important in the awareness of teachers. Articulation became an ongoing process--making explicit to learners as well as to their next teachers where their strengths and weaknesses lay. They found that it was not easy. The math teachers in the Keene, New Hampshire, project struggled with balancing the time-intensive work required for such feedback compared to the ease of machine scored tests. They devised a middle position, which gave them the best of both. The math examinations with machine-scorable answer sheets were used, but students were asked to document all their answers on separate paper. Thus, the teacher could go to the problems that students did not answer correctly, to determine where their mistakes were. Then they were able to provide additional instruction or practice in those areas.

The teachers in the project schools found that moving from the specific student outcomes to the assessment of student progress is an ongoing process. The teachers at Okmulgee, Oklahoma found ways to assess student progress and then to target skill areas that needed more work. "The project helped give the continuity that keeps kids from falling through the cracks," one teacher said.

The changing role of the teacher in the assessment process also became clear. A college professor and district teacher, both participants in the Keene, New Hampshire project, made this helpful distinction:

"Process versus Product"

> The more we understand the process that goes into producing the desired end product the better position we are in to help improve student performance. If teachers focused on process as well as product in all

> grade levels, students would find ease of transition as well as continuity of learning more effective. One of the most effective ways to narrow the gap between the student's native competence and his performance is to know where to intervene beneficially in the process. This process may be in the recursive stages of the writing or in the process of solving a math problem or in researching a science project.[6]

Another outgrowth of the attention to learning objectives, with the need for charting student progress toward them, was a recognition of the level of detail needed for this kind of documentation and record-keeping. With hundreds of objectives, teachers might well throw up their hands and say, "I can't be aware of where all these students are on each." Actually, teachers can and do track student development, especially in the early grades, through a myriad of discrete management techniques. But the overall impact of these abilities may better be charted through a smaller number that represent the whole. Keene began to wrestle with this issue, and identified the central, critical abilities that students need to develop. This also led them to look for behaviors outside the traditional content skills, assessing, for example, student readiness as indicated by punctuality, cooperation, study skills, and attitudes.

Assessment, then, as the one-by-one picture of the development of students, became a central component of teacher planning and process. But these project centers were also concerned with overall impact, the formation of long-range policies that would affect all students in the school or district. What of the distinction between assessment and program evaluation?

"Evaluation" focuses on the learning of the <u>teacher</u> or of the school district or system. It collects and interprets from the assessment of a number of individuals in relationship to a specific learning outcome and gives an overall picture of group achievement that can guide further decision making by the teacher or the system.

The kinds of talking across grade levels typical of the schools involved in the project led to clearly spelled out scope and sequence descriptions. Keene, for example, also noted the need for both feedback and feed forward. Teachers "delivering" their students to the next grade level were indicating specific areas of development, which the next level found very useful. However, there was soon a call for reporting back to the previous

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[6]Harold E. Nugent, language arts professor, Keene State University and Cynthia Prill Buffum, pre-school teacher, Keene, New Hampshire.

grade level--so that those teachers would know how well they were preparing students for the next level. The kinds of problems their students encountered in the next grade gave these teachers information on which they could make changes in their work with the next group. See Section VA for more on the value of feedback.

The over-all goal, of course, has been to improve student achievement at all levels of schooling by strengthening the transitions from one level to another. This kind of curriculum planning is not new. As a matter of fact, some persons reading this report may find these descriptions rather obvious or even trite. It is true that many good school districts have engaged in this kind of curriculum planning. All of us who have trained to be teachers or administrators have learned that this should be done and how. But, for a variety of reasons, many school districts do not coordinate and articulate curriculum as they all know they should. Resources are limited; time is not available; the incentive is not there; leadership is not strong or competent; teachers are not willing. So, we adopt textbooks, call them our curriculum, and school goes on. The parts are disconnected, and students' progress is spasmodic and erratic; learning steps are neither rational or dependable.

The result of our incapability and/or unwillingness to improve student achievement by these means is that state legislatures and state departments of education, in their efforts to remedy our deficiencies, legislate and mandate curriculum content, achievement standards, and tests to measure them. Furthermore, in states like Indiana, the governor's A+ educational reform program has set standards for remediation, retention and promotion.

B. CHINO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, CHINO, CALIFORNIA

Chino teachers and curriculum coordinators have undertaken a massive overhaul of the district's curriculum. They have come to the realization that the curriculum that they were providing their students was not well articulated. In fact they recognized and acknowledged that their curriculum was not unified, that it was instead disconnected from one level to another without logical sequences of learning activities and without coordination and direction between levels. Recognizing these deficiencies, the Chino administration, with extra-ordinary support from their Board of Education, began what can be described as a "major overhaul." Seven curriculum coordinators were appointed and given time and resources to undertake this work in five subject areas: mathematics, science, social science, language arts, and foreign language. This work proceeded under the direction of Chino's Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, Mary Louise Labrucherie, who was also appointed to be the local

project director for this demonstration center. Chino proposed to construct a new, articulated curriculum in all five of these subject areas even though this project required demonstration centers to develop a model in only one. The incentive provided by this project, the dedication and resolve of the faculty and curriculum supervisors, and the support of the Board of Education, which budgeted over $640,000, made the Chino efforts possible.

The objective of the Chino school district was very much in concert with the objectives of this project--to develop a K-12 outcome-based curriculum with appropriate assessment of student progress to ensure that "students of Chino Unified School District receive a quality and equally accessible educational experience that competitively prepares them for post high school study and/or work."[7]

Curriculum committees were formed for each of the subject areas, directed by the curriculum coordinators for that subject area. Each committee had teacher representation from all levels. Teachers received release time to accomplish their work and some were paid to write curriculum objectives in summer projects. The generous district budget provided for the coordinators' time (all continued to teach part time), for travel and conference attendance, for substitutes to release committee members, and for supplies and materials.

Curriculum planning proceeded with the help of university consultants, with the guidance of the California State Curriculum Framework, model curriculum standards, state college and university requirements, Stanford achievement test objectives, College Board and other tests of academic skills, and California Assessment Program objectives. The overall goal was to specify the learning outcomes to be taught at each level, to identify or develop the appropriate instructional materials to be used, to identify assessment tools and procedures. Chart Number 1, on page 28, shows the steps Chino teachers took in the curriculum reform process. The process in actual practice, empowered teachers to design the curriculum for each subject area. Consequently, Chino teachers from the beginning have felt a strong sense of ownership of the plan and the process used to develop it.

The success of the Chino reform efforts and the key to their ability to accomplish so much in so short a time is the manner in which teachers were empowered in this process. Their active involvement lifted their self-esteem as they were recognized and rewarded for their expertise in their subject areas. They were able to escape from their isolation from one another as they were

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[7]From the Chino project application, July 12, 1985

connected with teachers from other levels in the common task of helping to decide what students should learn (and therefore what should be taught) and how and when the curriculum should be presented. A new collegiality among teachers, supervisors, administrators, parents, counselors and university faculty resulted. Gene Maeroff makes this point, "Reform proposals that ignore the central role of teachers are doomed to failure... Giving teachers greater power is a major way to make them more professional and to improve their performance."[8]

The curriculum areas and their strands to be developed are shown in Chart Number 2 on page 29. The organizational plan for developing the Outcomes-Based Curriculum is shown in the Flow Chart 3 on page 30.

The planning was accomplished in the 1985-86 school year - the planning year - for this project. The planning was implemented in the second project year (1986-87) when complete curriculum guides were placed into use and school district publications reflected the "reformed" curriculum plan.

In addition, under the able direction of auxiliary programs curriculum coordinator, Audrey Folden, teachers adapted and adjusted the outcomes-based curriculum standards for limited English speaking students (LEPS), special education students, for Gifted and Talented (GATE) students, and for vocational education. The organization for this work is shown in Chart Number 4 on page 31.

In order to improve the level of communication between teachers at "sending" and "receiving" schools, the Chino district produced an itemized analysis of individual student achievement on the Stanford Achievement Test. This analysis showed which test items students answered correctly or incorrectly and those to which they did not respond. Teachers then prepared placement recommendations for the teachers at the next level. This plan provided receiving teachers full information on the level of achievement of each of the students they were receiving.

Chino also worked with the California State University System to develop an annual summary report of how Chino district graduates performed on the CSU English Placement Test (EPT) and the Entry Level Mathematics (ELM) Test. The universities use these test results to place students in the appropriate college courses, but they also acknowledge, by furnishing the results to the high schools, that the report "can provide useful information to administrators and faculty regarding student performance in

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[8] The Empowerment of Teachers. Gene I. Maeroff, 1988. (Maeroff is a senior fellow at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teachers.)

discrete areas which can be useful in developing and modifying secondary curricula...especially if data indicate specific strengths or deficiencies over several years."[9] Doris Lynch, Chino's coordinator of assessment, was able to report to the district superintendent, a breakdown of the scores for each of the Chino high schools, showing score distributions and the SAT and the persistence of students (percentage of students continuing beyond the fall semester). Her report also showed the grade point averages for Chino graduates, comparing both the grade averages and the test performance with all freshmen students from California high schools.

The reports of grade point averages and test scores furnished Chino teachers and administrators a sound basis for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their curriculum and instructional program.

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[9]Quoted from the letter to superintendents accompanying test scores from W. Ann Reynolds, Chancellor, California State University, September 3, 1987

Chart #1

SIX STEPS IN THE CURRICULUM REFORM PROCESS

Chino, California

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6
Agree to Philosophy	Review and Analyze Current Programs	Set Priorities	Develop Objectives (Write Outcomes)	Plan and Implement Program	Monitor, Evaluate, Revise
Honig's Core Curriculum	State Handbooks	Subject(s)	Coordinators	Teacher Inservice	CAP
Model Curriculum Standards	CAP SAT/CTBS	Grade(s)	Committees Staff Input	Activities/ Materials	Program Review Criterion Reference Testing
State Frameworks	Scope and Sequence-Skills Continuums		Communication Channels	Transition Guidance Counselors	Evaluation from "receiving" to "sending" schools

Chart #2

ARTICULATED CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
CURRICULUM STRANDS

Chino Unified School District

LANGUAGE ARTS STRANDS

I. Listening/Speaking
II. Vocabulary Development
III. Reading
IV. Writing
V. Reference/Study Skills

MATH STRANDS

I. Numeration
II. Operations
III. Measurement
IV. Algebra
V. Geometry
VI. Statistics and Probability
VII. Patterns and Functions
VIII. Logic

Problem Solving & Writing

SCIENCE STRANDS

I. Life Science
II. Physical Science
III. Earth Science
IV. Writing

SOCIAL SCIENCE STRANDS

I. Content
II. Essential Skills
Listening/Speaking
Reading/Vocabulary
Writing/Reference
Higher-Level Thinking

FOREIGN LANGUAGE STRANDS

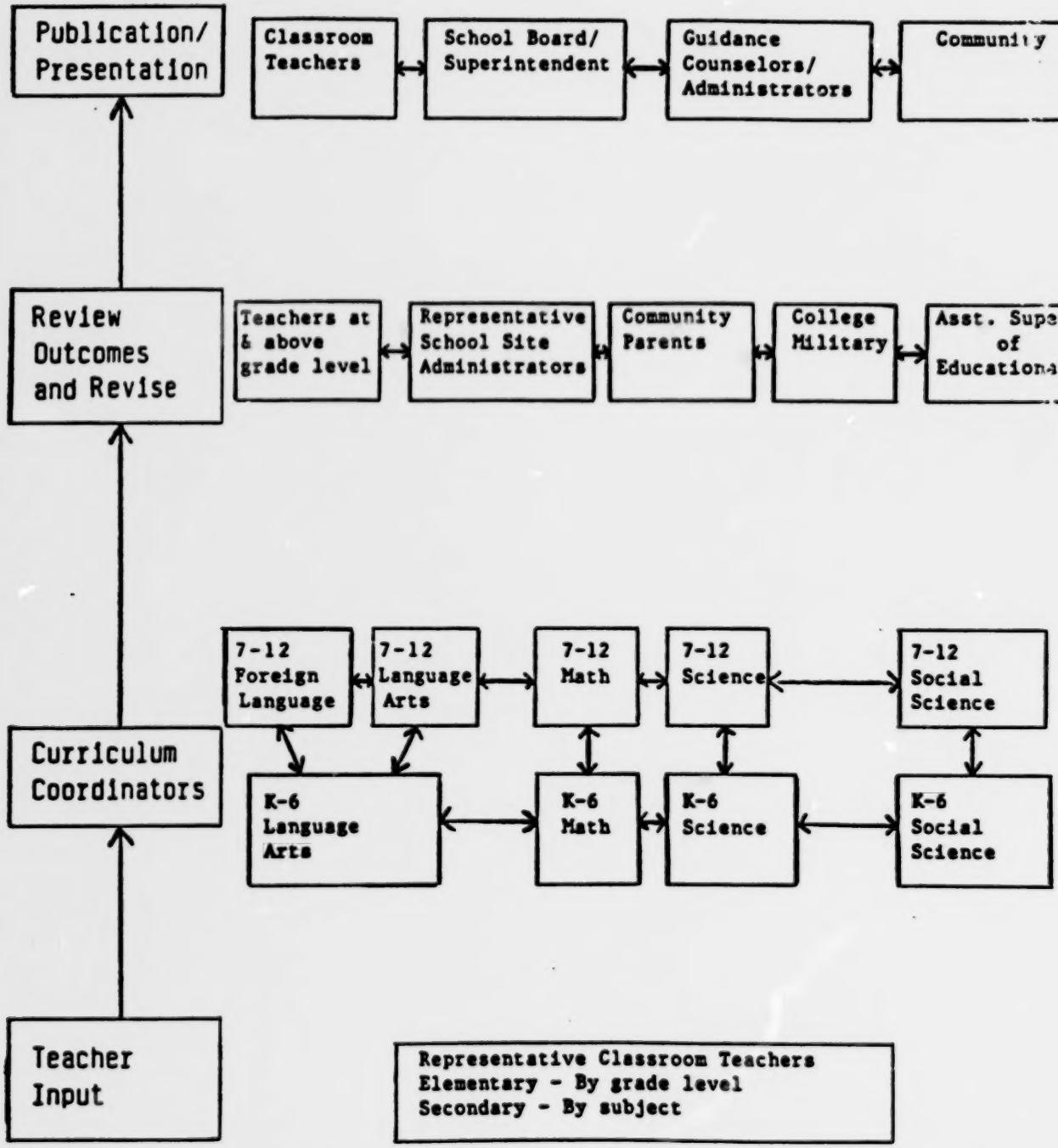
I. Vocabulary
II. Listening
III. Speaking
IV. Reading
V. Writing
VI. Culture

Chart #3

CHINO CURRICULUM COORDINATORS

Organizational Pattern For Developing Outcomes-Based Curriculum

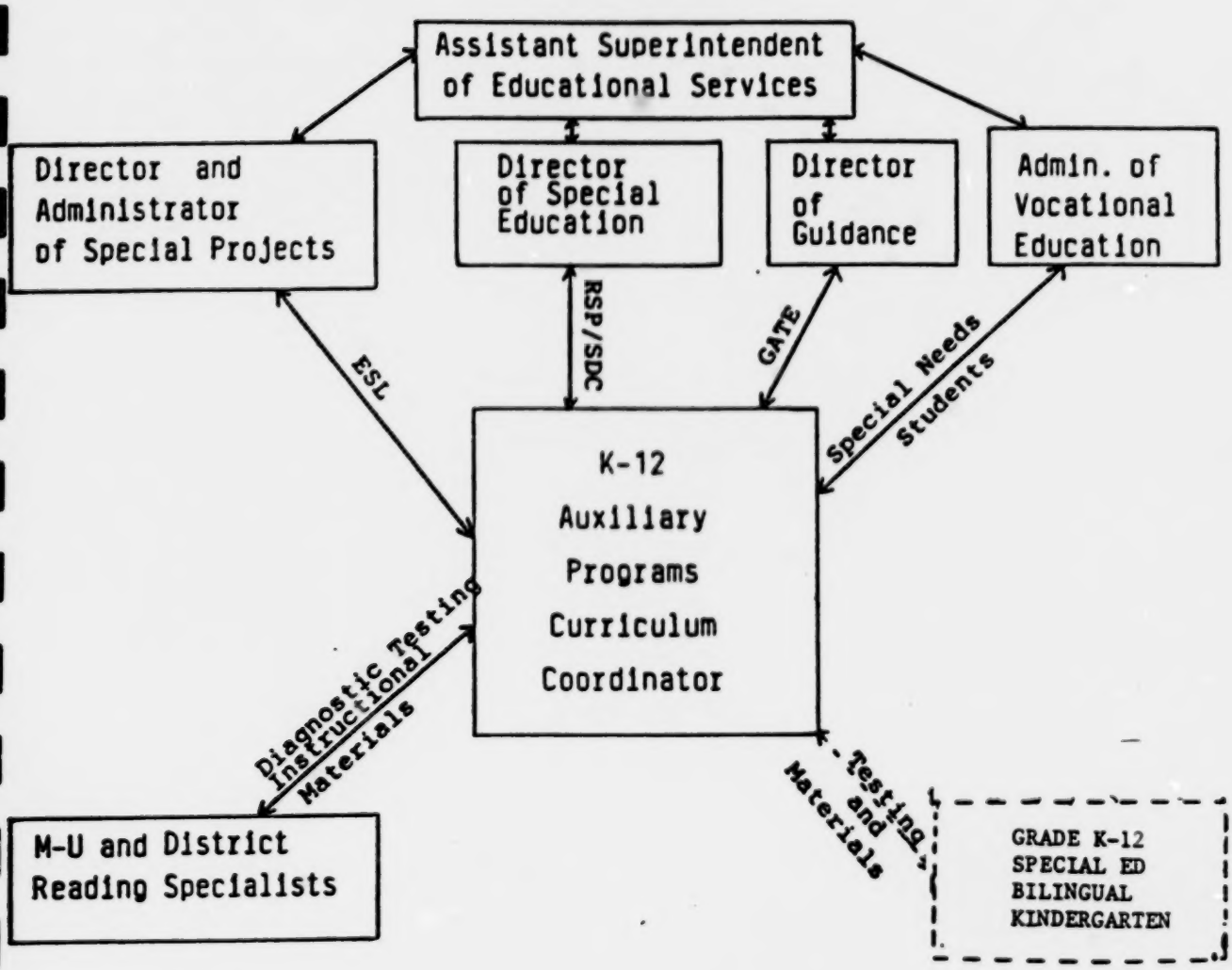
1985-1986



"STRENGTHENING SCHOOL TRANSITIONS FOR STUDENTS K-13"

Chino Unified School District
Auxiliary Programs

Organization



C. GWINNETT COUNTY, LAWRENCEVILLE, GEORGIA

Gwinnett County was selected as a demonstration center in part because of its excellent experience over a period of ten years in developing its computer-managed GEMS program (Gwinnett Educational Management System). Mathematics was the target for the GEMS program which was researched, developed, piloted and validated by math teachers at all levels. A math "benchmark" committee was established for this project to write objectives, to plan assessment, to evaluate the program and recommend changes. From these efforts came a set of guidelines for placement between grades and school levels and a system for reporting student progress to teachers, students and their parents. The program is fully developed for grades 1-12 in mathematics. A parent handbook has been developed with grade level objectives and activities, answering the most often asked questions: (1) "What does my child study at each grade?" and (2) "How can I help my child study math at home?"

In addition to the GEMS Criterion Referenced tests, the GEMS mathematics program has placement tests for grades 1-8. The tests are diagnostic and aid the teachers in determining (1) over-all achievement level of students entering a new level, (2) group placement, and (3) vertical acceleration. For students to be placed above grade level (vertical acceleration), they must score 90% on the post tests for the grade they have completed and they must demonstrate that they have achieved 80% mastery of the skills to be taught at the next grade level.

For high school placement in geometry, students must have a grade of "B" or better in Algebra I in the eighth grade. Students at the 80% level on eighth grade GEMS achievement tests may be placed in Algebra I; those from 60% to 80% enroll in Algebra Part I; those below 60% are placed in general math.

The GEMS program has a computer-printed profile sheet that periodically goes home to parents. The sheet shows how the student has achieved on each objective. The system also provides teachers and the school a means of monitoring how students are achieving the various concepts and skills, and it monitors vertical and horizontal articulation and tracks over-all student progress. An individual student profile for grade 3 mathematics is shown on Chart Number 5 on page 34. Assessment results for an entire fourth grade class in mathematics are shown in Chart Number 6 on page 35.

A similar GEMS program has also been developed, piloted and implemented systemwide in social studies for grades 1-12. The social studies program is based on the integration of content and skills.

The GEMS program will also be developed for language arts and science. A "benchmark" committee, organized for this project, has been developing the language arts skills continuum, designing an evaluation system, and field testing the materials. The plan is to have the GEMS program operational in the two additional subject areas in the next five years.

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** GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS **
* INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM *
** STANDARD CURRICULUM **
RUN DATE: 80/05/26

SCHOOL: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NAME TEACHER: NAME SUBJECT: MATH - GRADE 3

STUDENT: NAME
SUBJECT: MATH - GRADE 3 SCHOOL NAME

PERFORMANCE AT OR BELOW THE 50% LEVEL ON ANY OBJECTIVE MAY SUGGEST ADDITIONAL WORK NEEDED.

RIGHT/TOTAL		
	** TOPIC - MULTIPLICATION	
4/ 4	41.	MULTIPLY 2-DIGIT FACTORS BY 1-DIGIT FACTORS, INCLUDING MONEY
0/ 4	42.	ESTIMATE PRODUCTS INVOLVING MONEY BY ROUNDING TO THE NEAREST DOLLAR OR NEAREST TEN
	** TOPIC - DIVISION	
4/ 4	44.	DIVIDE BY NUMBERS LESS THAN 6 TO FIND 1-DIGIT QUOTIENTS AND REMAINDERS
4/ 4	45.	DIVIDE BY NUMBERS LESS THAN 6 TO FIND 2-DIGIT QUOTIENTS AND REMAINDERS
4/ 4	46.	ESTIMATE QUOTIENTS INVOLVING MONEY BY ROUNDING TO THE NEAREST DOLLAR
	** TOPIC - FRACTIONS AND DECIMALS	
4/ 4	47.	WRITE FRACTIONS FOR PARTS OF REGIONS OR SETS, USING RELATED PICTURES
3/ 4	48.	FIND FRACTIONAL PARTS OF NUMBERS, USING RELATED PICTURES
2/ 4	49.	COMPARE FRACTIONS, USING RELATED PICTURES
4/ 4	50.	WRITE DECIMALS TO REPRESENT ONES AND TENTHS, USING RELATED PICTURES
4/ 4	51.	FIND SUMS AND DIFFERENCES OF ONE-PLACE DECIMALS
	** TOPIC - MEASUREMENT: CUSTOMARY UNITS	
3/ 4	52.	ESTIMATE LENGTH USING INCHES, FEET, YARDS, AND MILES; MEASURE LENGTH TO THE NEAREST 1/4 I
2/ 4	53.	ESTIMATE CAPACITY USING CUPS, PINTS, QUARTS, AND GALLONS
3/ 4	54.	ESTIMATE WEIGHT USING OUNCES AND POUNDS, AND TEMPERATURE USING DEGREES FAHRENHEIT
	** TOPIC - PROBLEM SOLVING	
2/ 4	43.	SOLVE WORD PROBLEMS USING THE 5-POINT CHECKLIST AND CUMULATIVE COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS

43/ 56 PER CENT CORRECT: 76%

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** GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS **
* INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM *
** ASSESSMENT RESULTS **
RUN DATE: 88/05/26

SCHOOL: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NAME TEACHER: NAME SUBJECT: MATH - GRADE 4

** TOPIC - MULTIPLICATION: 2-DIGIT FACTORS
47. - MULTIPLY 2-DIGIT FACTORS BY 2-DIGIT FACTORS
48. - ESTIMATE PRODUCTS BY ROUNDING FACTORS TO THE NEAREST TEN OR DOLLAR
49. - MULTIPLY 3-DIGIT FACTORS INCLUDING MONEY BY 2-DIGIT FACTORS
** TOPIC - DIVISION: 2-DIGIT DIVISORS
51. - DIVIDE BY 2-DIGIT DIVISORS TO FIND 1-DIGIT QUOTIENTS
52. - DIVIDE BY 2-DIGIT DIVISORS TO FIND 2-DIGIT QUOTIENTS
** TOPIC - DECIMALS
53. - WRITE DECIMALS THROUGH HUNDREDTHS INCLUDING MONEY
54. - COMPARE DECIMALS THROUGH HUNDREDTHS
55. - FIND SUMS AND DIFFERENCES OF DECIMALS THROUGH HUNDREDTHS
** TOPIC - MEASUREMENT: CUSTOMARY UNITS
56. - ESTIMATE LENGTH USING INCHES, FEET, YARDS, AND MILES; MEASURE LENGTH TO THE NEAREST QUARTER INCH
57. - FIND PERIMETER BY ADDING THE LENGTHS OF THE SIDES
58. - ESTIMATE CAPACITY AND FIND EQUIVALENT UNITS USING CUPS, PINTS, QUARTS, AND GALLONS
59. - ESTIMATE WEIGHT USING OUNCES, POUNDS, AND TONS; ESTIMATE TEMPERATURE USING DEGREES FAHRENHEIT
** TOPIC - PROBLEM SOLVING
50. - SOLVE WORD PROBLEMS USING THE 5-POINT CHECKLIST AND CUMULATIVE COMPUTATIONAL SKILLS

		47	48	49	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	50	RIGHT/TOTAL	%
8400766	Student Names Here	3	2	1	2	4	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	2	37/ 52	71
8703333		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	2	4	4	48/ 52	92
8400825		4	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	2	4	3	3	4	44/ 52	84
8500822		3	2	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	44/ 52	84
8400893		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	52/ 52	100
8402364		4	2	4	4	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	45/ 52	86
8404669		4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	49/ 52	94
8401359		4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4	2	3	2	2	0	39/ 52	75
8406108		2	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	4	3	43/ 52	82
8402850		2	2	3	2	2	4	4	4	2	4	1	3	3	36/ 52	69
8807253		0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	3	0	0	0	1	9/ 52	17
8400335		3	2	2	2	1	2	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	36/ 52	69
8400734		3	3	3	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	2	3	4	44/ 52	84
8504043		4	4	3	3	2	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	46/ 52	88
8401360		2	3	3	1	1	4	4	4	2	4	0	4	4	36/ 52	69
8402572		4	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	49/ 52	94
8401044		4	3	2	4	4	3	4	4	3	4	2	4	4	45/ 52	86
8401802		3	4	4	3	4	3	2	4	3	4	3	4	4	45/ 52	86
8604148		4	4	4	3	4	4	2	4	4	4	3	3	4	47/ 52	90
8403319		2	3	1	1	1	4	3	2	4	4	1	4	2	32/ 52	61
8303093		3	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	47/ 52	90
8401049		3	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	49/ 52	94
8407697		4	4	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	4	3	45/ 52	86
8401831		3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	49/ 52	94
8300735		1	3	1	1	1	4	3	3	2	4	2	2	4	31/ 52	59
	PER CENT CORRECT	77	79	76	75	73	86	86	92	76	93	64	84	86	1047/ 1300	80

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D. SCHOOL DISTRICT OF KANSAS CITY, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

The plan for improving curriculum articulation in Kansas City required a different approach and a different time line. Because Kansas City is a large urban school district with the usual problems of size, communication, and levels of authority, the project steering committee chose to concentrate its efforts on the subject area of mathematics in one attendance "cluster", Southwest High school, with the junior high school and six elementary schools in that attendance area. This group of schools was chosen because of the high interest in mathematics already evident by the patrons of these schools and the commitment of the principal of the high school. The expectation was that the work done in these schools would transfer to other school clusters and other subject areas in Kansas City.

Kansas City teachers under the supervision of Ellen Landess, coordinator for mathematics and director for this project demonstration center, completed and implemented a completely new mathematics curriculum for grades K-8. This curriculum was in place and was utilized in the 1987-88 school year. The Kansas City approach to writing the mathematics curriculum was unique, in that articulation was "built in" in each step of the process. The strategy that strengthened articulation was the formation of writing committees. Usually, teachers of the various grade levels write and review the objectives for their grade level only, dealing exclusively with topics taught at that particular level.

The Kansas City approach was different. The subject of mathematics was divided into six topics or strands--geometry, logical thinking, measurement, number concepts, patterns and functions, and probability and statistics. Six teacher committees were formed, each to be responsible for one of the curriculum strands. Each committee consisted of two primary teachers, two intermediate teachers, and a middle school teacher.

The next step was also unique. They worked backwards in writing objectives in the various strands. Instead of thinking what should a kindergartner know about geometry, what a first grader should know, etc., they started with the eighth grade and worked backwards. For example, the State of Missouri mandated certain Key Skills and Core Competencies on which every student would be tested. The geometry committee took one of the eighth grade objectives, such as "finding the area of a rectangle" and worked backwards. If students were expected to master this concept in the eighth grade, what activities should they be involved with in the seventh grade, sixth grade, etc., so that they would be prepared for mastery at that level.

The basic idea was for a concept to be introduced one year, developed the next one or two years, and then reviewed and tested

the following year. To continue with the example of "area," fourth grade students would cover figures marked on the playground with one-foot square tiles, to discover intuitively that "area means to cover." Fifth grade students would work with figures on graph paper, physically counting the square units of each. As the student proceeded through sixth and seventh grade, appropriate activities would enlarge the scope of square units to include square inch, square centimeter, square yard, and square mile. In the seventh grade the formula for "area" would be introduced, if it had not already been discovered by the students in the previous year's activities. In the eighth grade, the students would review activities and exercises to reinforce the ideas developed in the earlier grades and be tested for mastery of the concept.

This may sound simplistic, but this was not an easy task. Teachers had difficulty accepting the responsibility for working on a concept if it was not to be mastered at their grade level. By having teachers from grades K-8 on each committee, teachers became much more concerned about what was taught prior to their level and what was to follow. Most importantly, they saw the value of informally introducing concepts and vocabulary early to allow students time to internalize the ideas.

During the writing process it became evident that many of the teachers were not knowledgeable about some of the mathematical concepts that were to be included in the curriculum. To meet this need, classes on topics such as logic were conducted by university professors. This helped teachers not only to have a better understanding of the concepts to be taught in grades K-8, but also to extend their knowledge to high school and college. The teachers felt these classes were very meaningful.

Kansas City reported a significant evolution in teacher attitudes during the six months they were working on the curriculum guides. Most teachers were on the committees because they had been picked by their principals as being knowledgeable in mathematics. As they proceeded with assigning committees and working on topics, they began to have problems. As they planned the special topic study classes they included all teachers, not just those working on that strand. In this manner all members increased their knowledge about the total curriculum. (These teachers would be part of the group to work with other teachers in the district to implement the guides when they were completed.)

After much "hashing and rehashing" about the placement of objectives in each strand, the teachers needed to determine if the objectives across the six strands were compatible. Selected teachers in the district were asked to critique the objectives from all six strands on their grade level. Consideration was given to the child's readiness for working with the concept and

materials, and to consistency of ideas across the strands. For example, teachers were careful to note if an activity for "area" included decimals before the student had worked with multiplication of decimals in the number concepts strand.

Thus, the curriculum writing process included inter-level as well as intra-level communications among the writers. This was really an eye opener for most of the teachers. Later a college professor verified the "correctness" of the mathematics, suggesting only a few minor changes.

What is noteworthy and possibly the most unique contribution to this project is the plan and process used in Kansas City to carry out their plan. The Kansas City plan had three parts:

1. Develop a mathematics curriculum, K-13, to "close the gap" in student learning; and eliminate needless repetition;

2. Develop a process whereby teachers at all levels--elementary, middle, high, and college--could strengthen articulation; and

3. Provide a system, based on feedback from each receiving institution, for counselors and admissions officers to advise students better about academic pursuits.

The implementation committee began its task by designing two surveys, one "to collect data concerning the knowledge, skills, and abilities which you expect your students to have mastered before they enter your class."[10] For example, teachers were asked to list "knowledges" and were given an example of "multiplication facts through nine times nine." In listing skills and abilities expected, they were prompted with the example, "Can solve linear equations in one unknown." The second part of the survey asked teachers to list knowledges, skills and abilities that they found deficient when students enter their classes, or in other words, "what you expect students to have when they reach your class, but they do not have."

Another survey of counselors and college admissions officers gathered information concerning their perceptions of students' problems which were related to mathematics courses. This data, combined with teachers' knowledge of what was being taught at each level along with achievement test scores for math, furnished base-line information on how well Southwest cluster students were achieving in math. This data also provided a picture of how consistently math concepts were being taught at each level, from

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[10]All statements quoted are from the survey instructions to the teachers.

school to school, and from teacher to teacher. The discrepancies between what is being done, what is expected to be done, and what students have mastered at each level provided the subject matter for math teachers from all levels when they were brought together to consider issues involving articulation.

It was at this point that Kansas City teachers began to sense the excitement and rewards of this project. Elementary, middle school, high school and college math teachers along with counselors and admissions officers were assembled, some with little idea of what to expect. They were divided into three small groups, "strategically assigned" to facilitate the greatest interaction. Their first questions to consider were "Is the data presented from the questionnaire a good representation of the situation as you observe it in your classroom? Are there things you would add to the results?" The small groups shared their answers with the total group.

Groups were re-formed to consider the question, "What is your perception of why the situation is as it is? What factors contribute to the situation?" Participants were described as interested and anxious to exchange perceptions, without hostility or malice. Misunderstandings were resolved as concerns were expressed about what happens at various levels of instruction. A college professor's "jaw dropped open" when he learned that in Kansas City (as would be true in many schools) students could be passed from one grade level to another regardless of their performance if parents signed a waiver. The professor then became more sympathetic with the concerns expressed by a junior high teacher.

The third and final question addressed by the interchanging small groups was, "What can be done to improve the situation? What can be done to help in the transition of students from one grade level to the next and from one school to the next?"

The discussion, scheduled to conclude at 5:30 on a Friday afternoon, would not stop, indicating the value and significance that teachers from four levels of schooling placed on this kind of dialogue. They left wondering why this same thing couldn't be done in all disciplines and involving all schools in the district. Individual evaluations of the day verify the importance teachers place on the kind of professional interaction that took place that day.

The efforts in Kansas City will continue. Their plans say "Communication is the key to developing a process whereby students may experience a smooth transition from kindergarten to college. Articulation cannot be left to chance. A clearly defined system must be in place that allows for face-to-face interaction at each level of schooling through which a student progresses."

E. KEENE SCHOOL DISTRICT, KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Keene School District has been engaged intensively in curriculum planning and development for several years. This experience has been a tremendous asset, both to the Keene professional staff in strengthening curriculum articulation, to this project, and of course to students. Keene's motto of "Quality Education: By Design" is most appropriate for the manner in which they have during recent years "designed" skills continuums in 12 subject areas. The preface of the K-12 Skills Continuum for language arts describes its purpose and its organization:

> The purpose of this continuum is to present in organized form the sequence of skills taught in language arts in Keene schools. The continuum is organized into the following components: Reading (K-6), Study Skills, Literature, Grammar, Usage, Mechanics, Spelling, Vocabulary, Speaking, Listening, Handwriting and Composition, followed by a Library Information Skills addendum.
>
> At the end of this guide, there are individual grades/level summaries for K- 12. These grade/level summaries also will appear in future revised syllabi and should be most useful to individual teachers. Presentation techniques and methods of study are at the discretion of the teacher.
>
> While the skills denoted in the continuum are for the average student (i.e., level II in 7-12), adjustments for lower ability levels 6-12 are reflected in separate grade/level summaries for 6-12 III. Skill levels may need to be adjusted by individual teachers in certain classes.

All skills to be taught are coded to indicate the approach and/or emphasis to be given to that skill. The following symbols are used:

I - Introduce. The skill or concept is introduced or previewed. Drill is not emphasized.

D - Develop. The skill or concept is systematically and fully developed. Extensive practice and/or drill are emphasized.

R - Reinforce. The skill or concept is reviewed and additional practice is emphasized if necessary.

O - Optional. Introduction and/or development of the skill or concept is optional. While any additional skill or concept, which the teacher considers important, may be taught; those included here are considered especially significant or are acknowledged as currently in use in some syllabi.

ID - The skill or concept is introduced or developed according to the teacher's best judgment about the readiness of the class.

DR - The skill or concept is developed or reinforced according to the teacher's best judgment about the readiness of the class.

D (not preceded by I in the continuum) - The skill or concept is introduced and developed.

R (not preceded by I or D in the continuum) - The skill or concept is listed as I and D in a different continuum. For example, some reading comprehension skills are listed as I and D in READING K-6 and as R in LITERATURE K-12.

This small sample from the section on Grammar-Parts of Speech shows at what level certain concepts and skills are to be introduced, developed, or reinforced in the Keene skills continuum. This sample is shown here to illustrate the design of this model, but cannot begin to convey the extent and impact of this curriculum work on the day-to-day work of teachers in all subject areas.

Although the continuums were in place when this project began, teachers and supervisors in Keene have used their curriculum model and this project to refine and strengthen their program and particularly to address issues involved in student transitions at critical points in the continuum. The Keene district has devised an evaluation system to review each continuum on a five-year cycle. These issues were outlined early in the project by Terry Pindell, high school department chairman for language arts, and member of Keene's steering committee. He

saw these issues and concerns from the high school perspective:[11]

1. The K-12 language arts skills continuum was fully implemented and already under revision (in a five-year cycle). Teachers already were heavily "invested" in the product and the process. It should not be done over, but the issue is how to get teachers to focus on what has gone on before students reach their grade level and what will be expected at the next. Teachers tend to concentrate only on the level they teach.

2. Biennial K-12 meetings have been used to discuss issues with the continuum. Duplication of skills or omissions of skills are revealed.

3. The English department has been developing year-end exams specifically written to test achievement in skills covered by the K-12 continuum. The need is to get a mechanism for communicating results of this testing from one grade level to the next and to get teachers to realize and to utilize the practical benefits of this information.

4. In spite of the efforts to communicate the skills to be taught and the expectations at each level, there is no provision to address the differences in philosophy and methodology in teaching at the different levels. The skill continuum does not address this issue, and teachers at one level do not understand or are not aware of the teaching methods, learning environment, and evaluation methods used at the preceding level.

5. Students themselves are frequently the source for information used by teachers and other students about the "real" learning expectations at earlier levels. This, obviously, is not the best basis for articulation between levels of schooling.

Keene teachers and administrators have used a number of programs and procedures to smooth curriculum articulation from one grade level to the next or from one school setting to the next. (Keene is organized K-5, 6-8, 9-12).

In faculty meetings information is shared informally among teachers, counselors, and administrators about individual student placement for the following year. All teachers attend two such

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[11]Paraphrased from a memorandum to the K-13 language arts transition committee in the first year of the project.

meetings for students they are sending and for students they are receiving.

Analysis of achievement test results reveal where student groups (not individuals) show weaknesses or strengths in certain areas. Decisions are made concerning content, time allocations, methodology, and materials and whether concepts and skills are properly placed in the skills continuums. Teachers in all schools at all levels are expected to follow the skills continuums in their instructional program.

Computer Managed Classroom Instruction at Keene

In 1987, Keene School District received a grant on the New Hampshire governor's initiative to supply all elementary teachers and secondary teachers of mathematics and language arts with personal computers to enable them "to manage the classroom environment with improved efficiency and effectiveness," and to "develop and implement a microcomputer system to facilitate curriculum management for teachers and provide data for principals and teachers to assess curriculum needs."[12] This proposal was designed to support this project, specifically to "strengthen the channels of communication between classroom teachers and to define standards for the transition of students from one level to another."[13] This computer program is still in development, but holds promise of providing the kind of "tracking" of student progress that this project believes is essential for strong curriculum articulation.

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[12]From the project proposal to the State of New Hampshire

[13]Ibid.

Keene School District Language Arts Skills Continuum

GRAMMAR K-12	K	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
I. Parts of speech*														
A. Nouns (concept)	I	I	I	I	D	R	R	R						
1. Common				I	I	D	D	D	R	R				
2. Proper			I	I	D	D	D	D	R	R				
3. Number					I	D	R	R						
4. Possessive					I	I	D	D	R	R	R	R	R	R
5. Collective								I	D	R	R	R		
B. Pronouns (concept)		I	I	I	I	D	R							
1. Personal (concept)		I	I	I	I	D	R	R						
a. Number					I	D	D	R	R	R	R	R		
b. Gender				I	I	D	D	D	R	R	R	R		
c. Case					I	I	I	D	D	D	R	R		
2. Possessive						I	I	D	D	R				
3. Relative									I	I	D	R	R	
4. Indefinite							I	D	D	R	R			
C. Verbs (concept)	I	I	I	I	D	D	R	R						
1. Action (concept)					I	I	I	D	D	R	R			
2. Linking								I	D	D	R	R		
3. Auxiliary/Helping					I	I	I	D	D	R				
4. Characteristics														
a. Tense (concept)					I	I	D	D	R	R	R	R		
b. Voice												I	D	R
5. Principal parts														
a. Regular							I	D	D	R	R	R	R	R
b. Irregular							I	D	D	R	R	R	R	R

*"Concept" indicates that the term might not be taught in early grades, but that the concept denoted by the term is taught.

F. OKMULGEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, OKMULGEE, OKLAHOMA

Okmulgee teachers and curriculum supervisors have devised a unique plan for curriculum articulation that goes beyond the typical sets of learning objectives and test items that assess progress. Curriculum planning for improved articulation in Okmulgee began with language arts teachers who set down the specific educational objectives for all aspects of language arts at all grade levels. For example, there are specific goals for all of the following:

I. Reading (Grades 1-8)

- A. Word recognition (Phonics)
- B. Word recognition (Structural analysis)
- C. Word recognition (Vocabulary)
- D. Word recognition (Auditory discrimination)
- E. Word recognition (Visual discrimination)
- F. Reading comprehension
- G. Study and reference

II. Language Arts Basic Skills-Mechanics (Grades 1-12)

- A. Parts of speech
- B. Capitalization
- C. Punctuation
- D. Usage
- E. Sentence structure
- F. Spelling
- G. Semantics

III. Composition (Grades 1-12)

- A. Expository writing (sentences, paragraphs, themes)
- B. Analytical writing
- C. Creative writing
- D. Letter-survival writing
- E. Research paper

IV. Literature (Grades 1-12)

As many as 100 learning objectives were written for each grade level. Objectives were specific and measurable.

The learning objectives in all of the areas listed above were carefully placed to provide a logical sequence of learning, from the most basic in the elementary years to the more complex in the high school years. This continuum of learning was the result of close communication and cooperation among teachers at all grade levels and with consultation from college instructors in language arts. The result is that Okmulgee teachers know precisely what is to be learned at each level and therefore what

must be taught. This kind of collaboration and consensus also led to agreements and policies on promotion and retention, and a general understanding and agreement on what students needed to know at each grade level and what the expectations would be for the next level. The unique "must", "should", and "optional" system was an integral part of this planning.

"Must" objectives or "mastery" objectives must be achieved for a student to be passed to the next level.

"Should" objectives are essential skills for a student to achieve to assure success at the next level.

"Optional" objectives are those for students ready to move beyond essential skills and learn in greater depth.

"Should" and "Optional" objectives become "Must" objectives in subsequent grade levels when mastery is eventually expected and required.

This model can be illustrated by two examples. The first are the "must", "should" and "optional" goals for third grade reading, the "Study and Reference" section.

LANGUAGE ARTS - GRADE 3

STUDY AND REFERENCE

MUST

1. Alphabetize words through the second letter.
2. Alphabetize words through the third letter.
3. Alphabetize words through the fourth letter.
4. Identify the section of the dictionary where a given word is located. (front, middle, back)
5. Locate needed information using a glossary. (choose correct entry word)

SHOULD

1. Follow oral directions to complete a task.
2. Follow written directions to complete a task.
3. Categorize words. (living, non-living, plants, animals, etc.)

4. Categorize objects. (living, non-living, plants, animals, etc.)

5. Use guide words in a dictionary.

6. Recognize entry words in a dictionary.

7. Choose the appropriate entry word in a dictionary.

8. Use the pronunciation key and diacritical marks to pronounce new words.

9. Select a definition for a word to fit the context when given a multidefinition word.

10. Locate needed information using a table of contents. (use chapter headings and page numbers)

11. Locate needed information using a title page. (author, title, place published, publisher, copyright)

12. Locate needed information in a bibliography.

13. Locate places and information on a map. (political, physical, and products)

14. Locate a place on a globe.

15. Summarize by restating main ideas.

OPTIONAL

1. Locate needed information using an index. (choose correct key word and cross reference if necessary)

2. Locate needed information in a telephone directory.

3. Locate needed information on a chart.

4. Locate needed information using a table.

5. Locate needed information on a graph. (line, bar, picture, circle)

A second example is this set of objectives for seventh grade basic skills, uses of the comma punctuation.

7th GRADE PUNCTUATION

Uses of the comma

MUST

1. Use the comma to set off the name or term used to address someone directly.

2. Use the comma after a word like yes, no, why, and oh at the beginning of a sentence when the word does not modify the next word.

3. Use a comma to separate direct quotations from explanatory words unless a question mark or exclamation mark is needed.

SHOULD

1. Use the comma to set off nonessential appositives.

2. Use the comma to set off parenthetical expressions.

3. Use the comma to separate two or more adjectives of equal force.

4. Use the comma after a succession of introductory prepositional phrases or a prepositional phrase of five words or more.

5. Use the comma to set off a nonrestrictive word, phrase, or clause.

6. Use the comma to separate independent clauses joined by or, nor, for, yet, and, but, and so.

7. Use the comma to set off interrupters and transitional words and phrases.

OPTIONAL

1. Use the comma to separate short clauses in a series.

2. Use the comma after an introductory clause or phrase containing a verb form.

3. Use the comma to punctuate dependent clauses.

4. Use the comma to set off contrasting expressions.

A similar set of objectives have been specified for every grade level in the four areas of reading, composition, basic

skills, and literature. Criterion referenced tests, both teacher-made and standardized, have been used to measure students' level of attainment of these objectives.

Sending teachers at Okmulgee prepare a checklist for each student moving to the next level. These checklists show the next teacher precisely what the student achieved at the previous grade level. This checklist, designed to communicate fourth grade earth science achievement to the fifth grade teacher illustrates the kind of curriculum transition information which moves with students to their new grade level.

4th Grade - Earth Science

MASTERED

EARTH AND WATER

_____ 1. The student will identify the shape, and layers of the earth.
_____ 2. The student will be able to identify parts of volcanoes, and identify the major areas of volcanic occurrence.
_____ 3. The student will study crustal movements as a cause of earthquake occurrence.
_____ 4. The student will study the cause of mountain formations and list the three ways mountains form.
_____ 5. The student will identify the differences in fresh water life and salt water life.
_____ 6. The student will investigate ways of conserving natural resources.
_____ 7. The student will study things that pollute their environment.

WEATHER

_____ 1. The student will identify the four layers of the atmosphere.
_____ 2. The student will study the water cycle.
_____ 3. The student will observe the different types of clouds.
_____ 4. The student will identify major types of storms and their location of frequent occurrences on earth.
_____ 5. The student will study the differences between weather and climate.
_____ 6. The student will study what causes seasons to change.

SPACE

_____ 1. The student will list the nine planets in order of distance from the sun.
_____ 2. The student will identify the sun as a star.
_____ 3. The student will identify the moon as the earth's natural satellite.

The arduous, time-consuming work that was invested by Okmulgee teachers and supervisors has had some gratifying results:

1. Channels of communication and collaboration among teachers, supervisors, and counselors have been opened across all grade levels.

2. The curriculum model has provided a means and a basis for setting expectations for each level and for setting policies on retention and promotion.

3. The model closes the gaps and shores up the deficiencies in student learning, insuring a logical continuum of learning.

4. The model provides more specific, useful information for parents regarding what students have achieved and what they should know.

5. Learning objectives and evaluation procedures are known and understood by everyone, including students and parents. Evaluation of student achievement provides the basis for changing teaching strategies, materials, and time allocations.

6. Student and teacher accountability for what should be learned and taught is more clear.

7. The model provides a systematic means of reviewing and revising all objectives and their level placement. It reveals where gaps and omissions occur and where there are overlaps and duplication.

8. The model provides a readily accessible and convenient body of information for the Board of Education to approve curriculum plans.

9. New teachers have a guide for what should be taught at each level.

The model for language arts was tested during the 1986-87 school year with a summer school program newly instituted to assist students with deficiencies. The model has also been implemented in science and is in process for social studies and mathematics.

Statements of Okmulgee teachers who have helped plan the new curriculum have identified the strengths of their model. A first grade teacher said, "It will be very helpful in the long run to teachers and students. We can pass along information from grade level to grade level and keep track of our students' progress."

A second grade teacher and a member of the curriculum planning committee, saw these advantages. "It has helped to clarify my objectives. It has been invaluable in establishing time lines. It will be extremely important for a new teacher or a teacher changing grade levels.

A third grade teacher who was closely involved with the curriculum planning said, ". . .the next grade teacher will know exactly where the students are and can start right on their level. . .and not go over material they have already learned."

Another elementary teacher expressed the value of meetings with other teachers to plan curriculum, saying, "It has been most beneficial to meet with teachers from other grade levels, elementary, middle and high school. I have not had very much to do with teachers at other levels. It is good to see what they do in their classes. It has helped me a lot to hear what other teachers have taught before me."

G. SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF SAGINAW, MICHIGAN

Since 1976, the schools in Saginaw, Michigan have been extensively involved in very comprehensive agreements with local colleges to articulate vocational education programs. Saginaw's Walter Averill Career Opportunities Center, along with a number of other secondary schools from three counties, have fully articulated programs in 12 vocational areas. This experience has provided a great advantage to Saginaw students and has been a significant asset to this project.

Articulation of Vocational Programs

Articulation agreements in Saginaw are coordinated by an Articulation Management Team. Through these agreements such as the Delta Consortium Articulation Program - Delta College and Participating Secondary Educational Institutions, students in Saginaw are awarded credit at the college level when they demonstrate that they have mastered the mutually agreed upon objectives. Students then enroll in the next higher course at the college level and receive credit only when they satisfactorily complete the next higher course.

In all such agreements, articulation is expressed in student performance standards, not in courses completed or grades earned. Students in each vocational area have individual records of their level of competence in specific tasks required for that area. For example, the machine shop program has 18 pages of specific tasks with space for recording the level of competence. Levels of competence are rated according to the following scale:

Rating Scale

A. Demonstrates ability to teach the task to others.

B. Task accomplished to given criteria.

C. Task accomplished with assistance.

D. Student has been exposed to the task.

E. Task assigned but not completed.

The process for planning articulation in each of the vocational areas is meticulous and thorough. It involves the following steps:

1. An ad-hoc advisory committee is formed.
2. An employer survey is conducted to ascertain market conditions, job demands, and specific skills required.
3. A student interest survey is conducted.
4. A thorough task analysis is prepared with interviews with the appropriate businesses or industries.
5. Equipment and vocational lab needs are determined.
6. Teacher qualifications and certificate requirements are recommended.
7. Recruitment procedures are set.
8. Vertical and horizontal articulation arrangements are examined and refined.

The Ad-Hoc Committee for a new program in industrial technology was made up of 16 representatives: eight from the school, six from industries, and two from employee unions.

The Saginaw experience has led to this statement concerning successful articulation.

> Successful articulation in vocational and technical education is learner oriented. It provides consistent frames of reference for learners in pursuit of vocational and technical skills. It has the tendency to eliminate confusion in student progression through curriculum, and eliminates the need for relearning in the transition from course to course and institution to institution. Articulation also is an essential component of career education. In vocational/technical education, career

development content must be consistent. It is career development content which ultimately assists learners in identifying, choosing, and pursuing vocational or technical goals.[14]

Early Childhood Programs

Another very exemplary articulation model has been implemented in Saginaw at the other end of the continuum, in early childhood education.

> Realizing that the first and possibly most traumatic transition is the child's first experience with a school setting - usually due to developmental deficiencies and not ability - Saginaw has instituted a series of alternative programs at the early elementary level. The purpose of the alternate to traditional education sequences is to identify developmental problems early and prevent the almost certain school failures later on. Pre-Kindergarten is the developmental step for four year olds, designed to provide children from socio-economically deprived backgrounds an environment that will enable them to develop school readiness skills. Young Fives is a developmental alternate for kindergarten aged students - particularly those with June to December birthdays, who are not ready emotionally, socially and physically. Kindergarten is the basic program, while Junior First offers a developmental alternative to first grade placement for students who continue to lag developmentally. Students for both Young Fives and Junior First Early Prevention of School Failure program, and placement is recommended based on this extensive prescriptive tool in conjunction with teacher documentation. Only at the Junior First level, however, does the professional staff have the final decision regarding placement.[15]

Outcome Based Curriculum

Recognizing that smooth transitions are unlikely or even impossible when students, teachers, counselors, and parents are not aware of what objectives are to be mastered at each grade or course level, Saginaw's superintendent in 1986 directed his professional staff to review, refine, sequence, and specify curriculum for grades K-12. He intended to insure stronger transitions and to avoid needless repetition from grade to grade and course to course. He appointed subject area coordinators in the late summer, provided some released time for them, and the

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[14]From Saginaw's Senior High Task Force report, 1987.

[15]From Saginaw's Elementary Task Force report, 1987.

work began. Tasks were identified and timelines for implementation were set. (See Chart Number 7 on pages 55 and 56.) The plan affected all subject areas. Coordinators and key teachers were given released time to accomplish the task. End-of-semester tests in all major core subjects and content areas were developed, with implementation in selected areas beginning in 1987-88. This assessment will move to all major content areas in the 1988-89 school year. A philosophy that the major role of all personnel, teaching and non-teaching, is to support teaching and learning, is making the process a success. (Following is a flow-chart showing how the process works in Saginaw. See pages 57 and 58.)

Chart #7

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF SAGINAW
CURRICULUM REVIEW K-12 1986-87

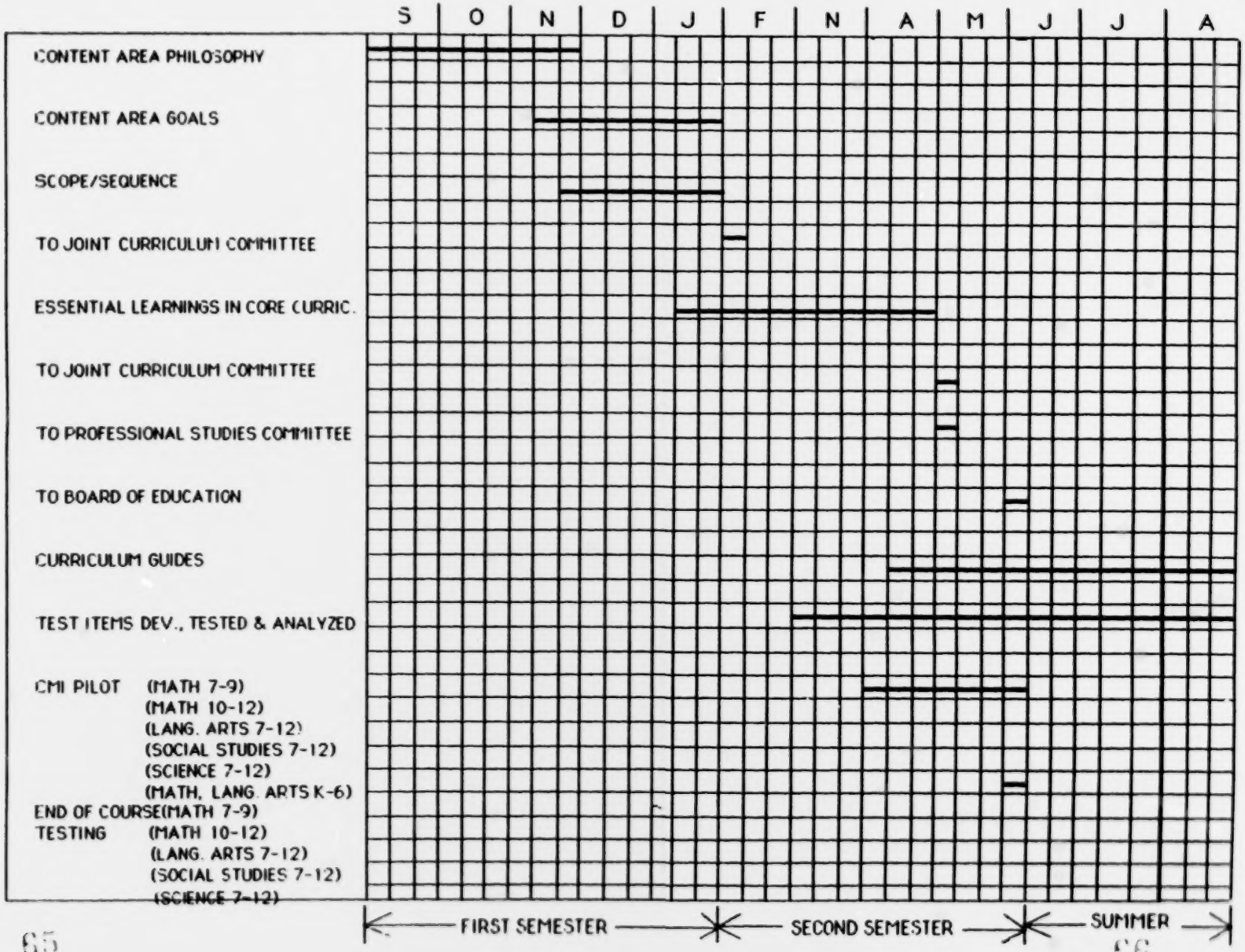


Chart #8

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF SAGINAW

CURRICULUM REVIEW K-12 1987-88

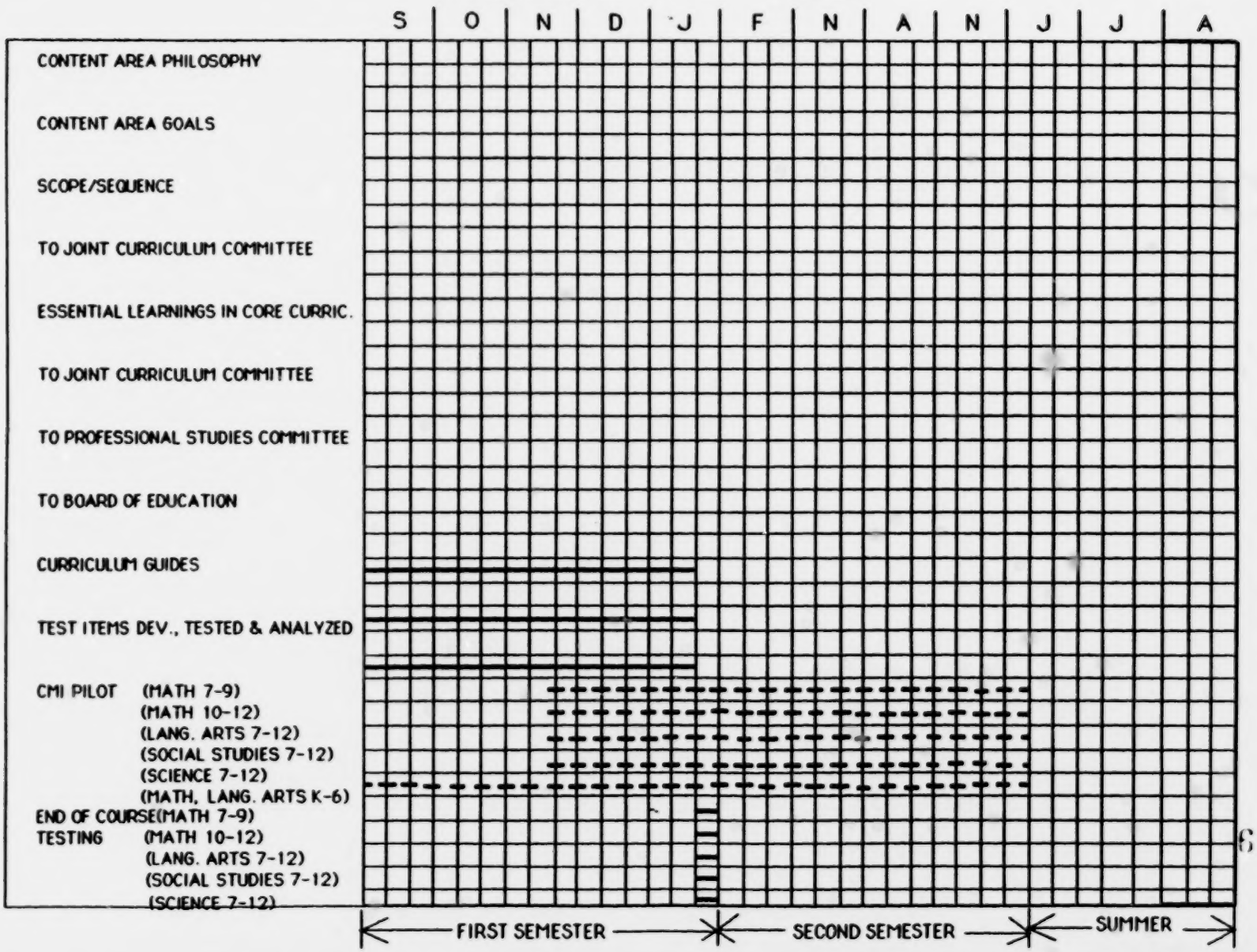
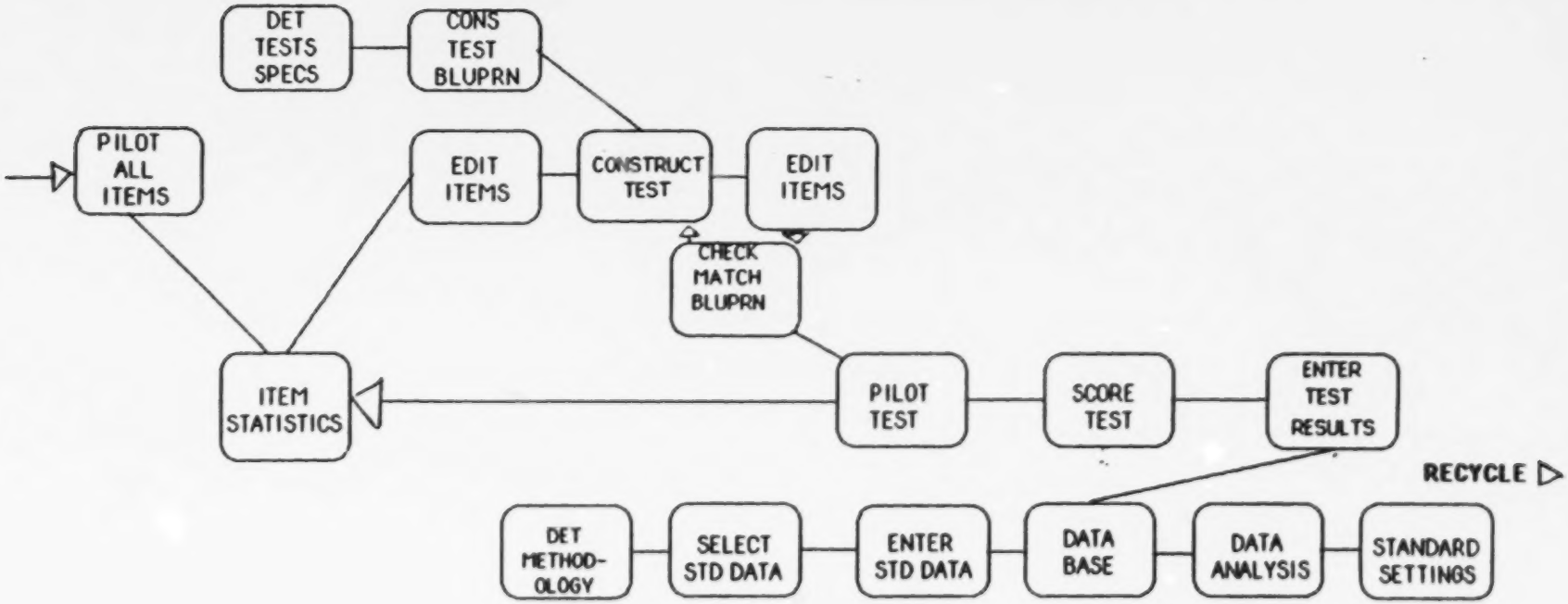


Chart #9

CURRICULUM REVIEW CONTINUED

COMBINED EFFORT UNDER DIRECTION OF EVALUATION, TESTING, & RESEARCH



Evaluation, Testing and Research

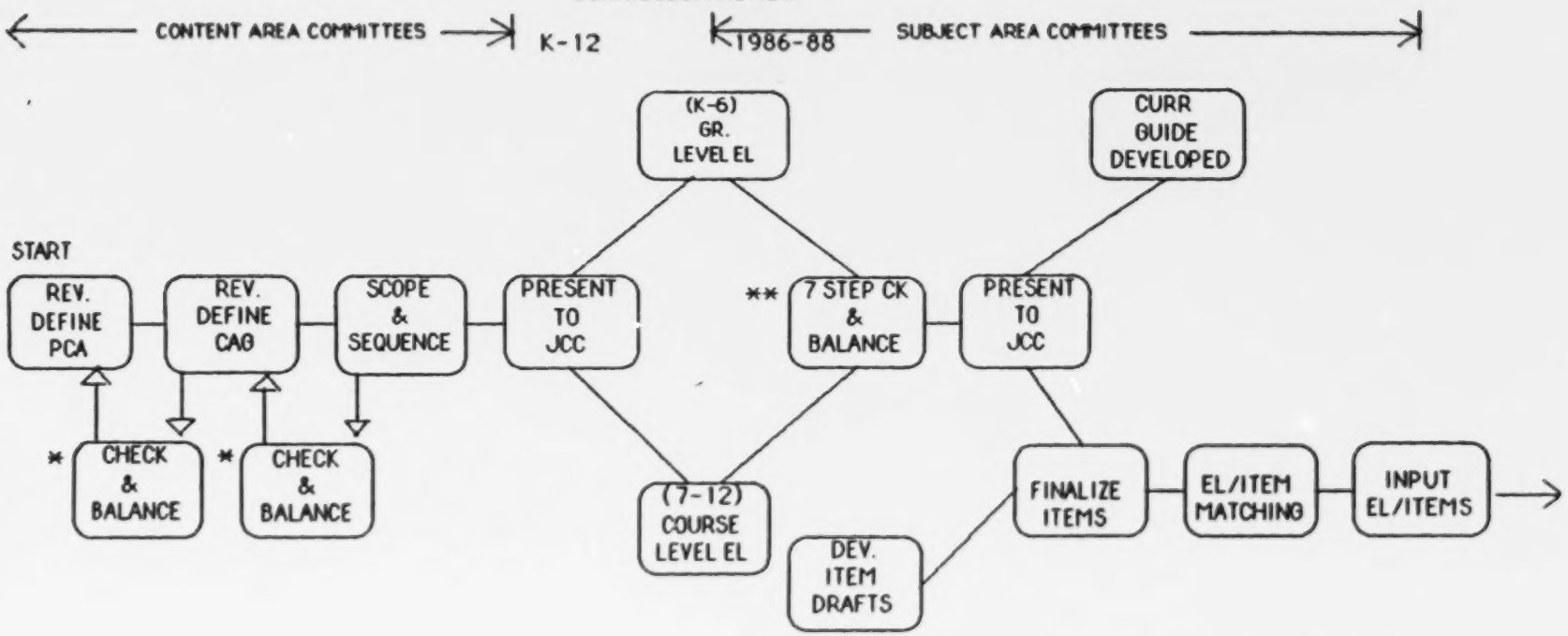
Office of K-12 Curriculum

Revised 12/8/86

Chart #10

School District of the City of Saginaw

CURRICULUM REVIEW



LEGEND

PCA = Philosophy of Content Area

CAG = Content Area Goals

JCC = Joint Curriculum Committee

EL = Essential Learnings

ITEM = Test Items For End-Of-Course & Classroom Measurement of Essential Learnings

* • Checks for consistency with District Philosophy, Goals

• Checks for inclusion of C.A.T., MEAP, N.D.E. Goals/Objectives

• Checks for realistic program in terms of pupils, time, facility available.

** • Do EL reflect CAG?

• Do EL include all important out comes necessary for success at next level?

• Do EL include outcomes demanded by society?

• Do EL reflect C.A.T., MEAP, & MDE essential learning?

• Are EL in harmony with sound principles of learning?

• Are EL realistic in terms of pupils, time, and facility available?

• Are EL defined in terms of observable changes in student behavior?

Evaluation, Testing and Research
Office of K-12 Curriculum

Revised 12/8/86

H. METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WARREN TOWNSHIP INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

By any standard, the Warren Township Schools would be considered a district of high quality, with outstanding facilities, a highly qualified professional staff, a strong curriculum, and a supportive community. Even so, they recognized that the area of curriculum planning for better articulation was a serious shortcoming that this project could help them improve.

They submitted in their project application that they would "hope to become more proficient in defining standards and expectations at each grade level." They envisioned a curriculum development model based on "clearly stated program level and student performance level objectives." After content knowledge, concept mastery, and skill development had been defined, they wanted to have these expectations communicated more specifically from grade to grade and from course to course. Their stated goal in the project was to "improve significantly our capability to evaluate our schools by the written, agreed-upon student outcomes... and to use the evaluation process to impact our instructional programs."[16]

Warren Township has made significant progress toward achieving these objectives. Prior to their becoming a demonstration center, Warren Township could be described as having a solid, traditional program of curriculum articulation, characterized by the usual curriculum committees, studying, reviewing, revising, and rewriting curricula, sometimes in summer projects. Evaluation methods were traditional teacher-made tests along with the California Test of Basic Skills. Instructional directors oversaw the process. Vertical and horizontal articulation were described as informal and not dependable. They happened, not by design, but by happenstance. A well-defined promotion and retention policy was in place for grades 1 through 8. Class profiles were in use in reading grades 1 through 6. A cumulative folder holding the record of each student's reading level, with specific skills and deficiencies, accompanied each student from grade to grade. Math skills were similarly communicated across grade levels. In spite of these strengths, Warren Township sought opportunities to strengthen the critical transition points through "communication, collaboration, and assessment of standards and expectations."

Using the incentive of this project, Warren Township began a broad-based approach to improving curriculum articulation. They formed a steering committee with representatives from elementary, junior and senior high schools. A communication, decision making

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[16]From the Warren Township project application, July 16, 1985.

structure provided for building level as well as inter-building involvement in goal setting, program planning, implementation and evaluation. (See Section IIC for more information on this model).

The first subject area to be targeted was math in the first year of the project, then science, followed by reading and language arts. Enthusiasm for the project activity motivated other department staff to seek involvement. Significant program articulation began somewhat serendipitously in other content areas: home economics, industrial arts, music, art, physical education and business education. Betty Poindexter, appointed director for this project while she was assistant principal at the Walker Career Center, was appointed director of curriculum and instruction for the district to oversee the curriculum work. Curriculum writing teams were formed to rewrite curriculum guides listing specific performance objectives for each grade level. They used extensive resources including textbooks, supplementary materials, curriculum guides from other schools, state department guides, and standardized, commercially-prepared tests. The total staff in each subject area across grade levels and from all schools was involved--including university faculty consultants. Inservice programs were conducted to help teachers write objectives, select materials, equipment and supplies for implementing the curriculum.

A consultant from this national project provided assistance to Warren Townshiphip in designing assessment tools to measure student achievement. Developing assessment instruments revealed that there were serious flaws in the curriculum in some areas. The curriculum planning revealed that there was little uniformity among teachers at the same grade level or in the same course. Consequently there could be little continuity or logical progression in learning for Warren students. They learned at the same time that, "What gets tested, gets taught."

Along with the planning of specific performance objectives and design of assessment procedures, the committees planned a record keeping system to provide a method for tracing learners' progress through the progression of learning objectives. They also planned to gather data on individual student achievement and establish a systematic means for feeding back this information to the sending grade level or school. All of this evaluative data will then be used to affect changes in the instructional program: content, materials, methodology, time allocation, standards. Warren is providing for students who cannot stay in step through these educational connections and who need alternative programs, remediation or acceleration.

The progress made in revamping the science curriculum, as described by Frank Bynum, is particularly noteworthy. In his baseline data report on the status of science articulation in

Warren Township (1985-86), Bynum found that there was little communication among the schools in the township. It was unclear whether course content was consistent among teachers of the same courses. Gaps and overlaps were evident, particularly between junior high and the high school. Some teachers were unaware of the existence of curriculum guides and therefore devised their own curriculum. They were not encouraged to follow the established curriculum guide. Evaluation of the curriculum was not systematic or consistent K-12. Academic achievement of students moving to the next grade level was not generally known. What records were available were kept in guidance counselors' offices where they could be seen only on request.

The major updating of the science curriculum began in May of 1986. A district-wide science-health curriculum writing committee made up of classroom teachers from all levels and chaired by teachers began writing curriculum objectives. College level consultants helped train teachers to write objectives appropriate to each level. Textbooks based on these objectives were selected by the same curriculum writing committees. At present, there is an ongoing process to develop exit-type evaluation instruments for each course and/or grade level to ascertain how well objectives have been met.

This work differed from previous curriculum planning in two major ways, according to Bynum. Training workshops improved the quality of the curriculum objectives. Time was provided for the curriculum writers to do the work. Another major improvement in articulation of curriculum was the appointment of a K-12 science director, effective for 1988-89. This administrative support will insure that the various grades and school levels will be linked with logical progression of knowledge and skills through the science curriculum. Accountability will be possible with the newly articulated science curriculum. Frank Bynum summarizes the effort, "Warren Township has made a quantum level jump in improving science curriculum articulation. The ground work has been laid toward further improvements during the three years of the Educational Connections Project."

The State of Indiana, as part of the governor's A+ educational reform program, has instituted the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) which will control some of the critical curriculum issues. Testing is mandatory at specified grade levels with achievement standards for promotion set by the state. The "achievement standards" are defined as "a score which defines the ability of a student to succeed at a given grade level. Students who score above the standard are judged to have the necessary basic skills to succeed at the next grade level."[17] Warren Township must comply with such mandates

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[17]"ISTEP Questions and Answers," Indiana Department of Education

and conform and adapt their curriculum planning to the state requirements.

Although fine arts education was not a target for curriculum work on behalf of this project, art teachers followed the lead of project people and began curriculum planning. In their report, they confess that fine arts department heads at the three levels did not know each other by sight, let alone name. They preferred to work independently with no interest in what was being taught in other classes at their own level or at other levels. Their efforts during this project, they say, "In a few words, we have moved from 'I' to 'we' with pleasant communication coming from all levels." Teachers at different levels have learned the extent and type of fine arts curriculum taught at all levels. A first year teacher, struggling with typical new teacher problems, stated that the one area where she felt most secure was in curriculum.

The communication among fine arts teachers from all levels resulted in a new format for the annual Fine Arts Festival--participation by performing and visual arts students from elementary, junior high and high school levels, an objective previously unobtainable.

Over the three-year period, Warren Township focused on three objectives to improve student achievement: (1) Agreeing on what students should learn in measurable terms at each grade and in each course, (2) testing what is taught in the curriculum, and (3) communicating learner expectations and achievement to students, their parents, and teachers. The locally developed tests, standardized norm-referenced achievement tests, and the testimonials from the staff corroborate the assertion that working toward the three objectives did increase student achievement.

End of the year math achievement tests show that students' achievement in computation skills, concepts, applications and total math achievement has improved dramatically at every grade level 1-8 during the term of this project. The table on page 63 shows that achievement as evidenced by the California Achievement Test (math battery) improved at every grade level tested from the base-line year of 1986 to the evaluation year of 1988.

The connection with the colleges has been strengthened as well. Most Warren students attend state universities in Indiana. An arrangement with Indiana University at Bloomington and Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis has fed back information from the universities on how Warren students are succeeding in freshman level courses. (See Chapter VA.)

California Achievement Test Results for Mathematics, 1986-1988
Metropolitan School District of Warren Township, Indianapolis, Indiana

	GRADE 1		GRADE 2		GRADE 3		GRADE 4		GRADE 5	
	CTBS	CAT	CTBS	CAT	CTBS	CAT	CTBS	CAT	CTBS	CAT
TOTAL MATH PERCENTILE 1986		53*		52*		59*		53*		51*
TOTAL MATH PERCENTILE 1987		54*		54*		64*		53*		55*
TOTAL MATH PERCENTILE 1988	*	76	*	75	*	65	*	63	*	60

	GRADE 6		GRADE 8		GRADE 10	
	CTBS	CAT	CTBS	CAT	CTBS	CAT
TOTAL MATH PERCENTILE 1986		65*		58*		60*
TOTAL MATH PERCENTILE 1987		61*		58*		65*
TOTAL MATH PERCENTILE 1988	*	72	*	67	*	65

* COMPARABLE SCORE

I. RECOMMENDATIONS ON CURRICULUM PLANNING TO STRENGTHEN ARTICULATION

1. Curriculum in each subject area should be based on specific learning objectives for each level. Objectives should be based on sound learning theory and content that is current and relevant.

2. Learning objectives should be expressed as a description of what students will know and be able to do.

3. An integral part of the planning should include a design or system for assessing the success or progress students make in achieving the learning objectives. Assessment methods should be varied, both quantitative and qualitative.

4. Classroom teachers should have a primary role in planning of learning objectives and selection of assessment tools, and should be held accountable for teaching to those objectives.

5. Administrators should be held accountable for curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.

6. Teachers and curriculum supervisors should be given time, resources, and recognition for curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation.

7. Boards of Education must give final approval to the curriculum development work and provide for the required time and resources for implementation.

8. Individual student progress toward the achievement of the learning objectives should be documented at every grade and at each school transition.

9. Schools should take advantage of computer technology to manage instructional programs and transmit student achievement data that will be needed to strengthen transitions K-13.

10. Standards of achievement that affect promotion, retention and placement should be clearly specified and communicated to students and their parents.

11. School progress and promotion from one level to another should be based on achievement of learning objectives rather than on age, time spent, grades, or credits earned. Special programs or remediation should be provided as early as possible for those students who cannot or will not meet achievement standards. Challenging programs should also be developed for those students who need acceleration or enrichment because they exceed qualitative standards.

12. Assessment data should be analyzed regularly to identify where learning gaps and deficiencies occur and to determine how the instructional program should be strengthened.

13. The assessment process should include direct person-to-person interaction and communication between "sending" and "receiving" teachers.

14. Curriculum development and planning is a continuous process. Each school district should provide a system for monitoring, adjusting, and up-dating learning objectives K-13.

15. New teachers and teachers changing assignments or levels should have adequate time to prepare for their responsibilities with the curriculum.

IV. STUDENTS MAKE THE TRANSITIONS

> The work load has practically tripled since junior high. I hardly ever had homework. We never wrote major papers, just book reports and most of the time one page was enough. This year we were just supposed to know how. Only someone forgot to teach us.[18]

A. WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS STUDENTS ENCOUNTER IN MAKING TRANSITIONS?

The process used to identify critical transition points also revealed the problems students encounter in making the transitions. The Keene, New Hampshire, demonstration center approached this task in a general way first by listing the student-oriented problems, the administration oriented problems, and the teacher-oriented problems.

Student-Oriented Problems (Identified by Teachers)

1. Unable to complete work on time
2. Short attention span
3. Poor reading skills
4. Poor organizational skills
5. Poor fine motor skills
6. Poor self-concept
7. Poor social skills
8. Chronic absenteeism
9. Weak listening skills
10. Inability to follow directions
11. Unwillingness to give up old habits and environments
12. Inability to cope with demands of independence
13. Inability to solve problems
14. Inability to think critically

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[18]A Keene High School freshman

15. Poor study skills

16. Inability to budget time

17. Inability to set priorities

18. Poor decision making skills

19. Inability to keep assignments

20. Poor note taking skills

21. Poor class preparation

22. Inability to take care of belongings

23. Reluctance for risk taking

Administration-centered Problems (Identified by Keene administrators and project directors)

1. Daily schedule too complex and demanding

2. Insufficient passing time between classes

3. Inconsistent grading system

4. Homework overload

5. Overemphasis on academics

6. Overloaded classrooms

7. Failure to set clear expectations and standards

8. Unreasonable extra-duty assignments for teachers

9. Failure to plan necessary orientation activities

10. Lack of policies on curriculum articulation

Teacher-Oriented Problems (Identified by Keene teachers and administrators)

1. Lack of empathy with student problems

2. Unreasonably high expectations and standards

3. Unwillingness to extend extra help

4. Punitive policies on class attendance

5. Inflexibility

6. Over-emphasis on content rather than skills development

7. Failure to articulate curriculum with previous grade or level and following level

Similar lists of problems could be generated for parents and the community, all contributing to the difficulty students have in making transitions.

When students in Gwinnett County, Georgia, were asked about their concerns in facing a school transition, they offered some rather surprising, but real concerns. Their concerns were for (1) getting to class on time (2) finding lockers (3) keeping up with "materials" (4) finding lunchrooms and bathrooms (5) getting on the right bus to go home (6) getting through the crowded halls and (6) remembering which class to go to next.

More insightful were their concerns for the different ways classroom instruction and procedures were organized. Whereas in the elementary school, assignments were written on the chalkboard, in middle or high school students were expected to write them in their notebooks. In elementary school students keep books and supplies in their desks, whereas in middle or high school they have lockers that they must visit between classes. In the elementary school the length of instruction is varied depending on the demands of the assignment, whereas in the middle or high school classes are divided evenly into forty or fifty-five minute segments. These differences which teachers live with daily present unanticipated challenges to students making transitions. These differences must be recognized by all school personnel and provisions made to assist and support students through these changed school conditions.

Students themselves express most eloquently the trials and tribulations of transitions. Keene High School freshmen described their difficulty in adjusting to high school as follows:

> I never really had to study before. I always got A's. I think it would be better if the teachers asked more of the kids in the junior high. I'm really struggling to learn how to study.
>
> We need more time to learn and adjust to new rules and new expectations.
>
> Not having enough time to spend with friends or family or doing anything except homework. There was so much pressure with midterms.

With a full seven periods, no study halls, and a sport each season, I have no time for anything. I'm tired all the time.

The teachers don't explain things enough. Taking notes is hard for me to do and we need the notes for the tests.

Keene freshmen identified some additional adjustment problems:

1. Adjusting to early rising, a longer school day, leading to late-night homework and chronic fatigue
2. The greater number of students, crowded hallways, more complex schedules, finding classrooms
3. Insufficient study time during the school day
4. Less explaining, less reminding, and less guidance from teachers
5. Grading differences between junior high and high school. Different honor roll standards
6. Too short a passing time between classes
7. Stress of midterm and final exams
8. Distractions from undisciplined students who "goof-off" and are not controlled by the school
9. Poor preparation for longer writing assignments, essays, and term papers
10. Less individual attention than at junior high level - more difficulty in getting to know their teachers - at the same time that they long for more freedom and independence
11. Time demands of school activities and balancing these demands with increased homework

Still more transition problems were identified by the teachers at Warren Township schools when they held "Transition Level Meetings" to determine what were the social adjustment issues for students moving from sixth to seventh grade (elementary to middle school). Five small groups identified all of the following:

1. Changing classes

2. Lack of parent involvement

3. More teachers to deal with

4. No recess, no free time

5. New grading standards and procedures

6. More peer pressure

7. Developmental differences between boys and girls

8. Cliquishness

9. Fear of new, larger, more impersonal school

10. Accepting more responsibility for their own actions

11. Dealing with older children

12. Merging with students from five elementary schools

13. Lack of basic skills (reading and science specifically mentioned)

14. Unrealistic parental expectations

15. No exposure to extra-curricular activities at elementary level

16. Unfamiliarity with student lockers

17. Following the school schedule

18. Longer range assignments

19. Social immaturity

20. Coping with adolescent physical development

Closely associated with these student transition problems were those identified by the teachers as problems which prevented them from working effectively with their students.

1. Lack of time

2. Need for orientation or "guidance" classes

3. Lack of opportunities for visitation across levels

4. Lack of communication, building to building, teachers to teachers, students to students, across levels

5. Lack of support from homes

6. Lack of student motivation for spring testing program

7. Ineffectiveness of disciplinary procedures

8. Errors in placement of students coming in

9. Need for more student data on achievement and social adjustment

The "brain storming" discussions at Warren Township's Transition Level Meetings also addressed the question of what steps could be taken to remedy these problems. The programs developed to strengthen transitions at Warren Township are described in other parts of this report.

The transition from high school to college has been analyzed and the pitfalls documented by college admissions officers and counselors more thoroughly than some of the earlier transitions. A Keene State, New Hampshire, faculty member[19] surveyed 167 freshmen during the second semester of 1988. The survey asked students to identify the major obstacle they had to overcome in making the transition from high school to college. His findings are as follows:

1. Thirty percent of the students cited time management, mentioning their difficulty in handling new freedom, the need for more self-discipline, and the recognition of increased responsibility in all dimensions of daily life. A major concern was the shift of the burden of study responsibility from teachers and parents to self. In the words of one freshman:

> There is one major problem in transition from high school to college that really affected me. That is the complete change from being forced to do work, to having to do it on your own. It took a whole semester to get adjusted to being completely responsible for my own work. That learning period was an expensive lesson. It seems to me there should have been some type of preparation for this in high school.

2. Twenty-five percent of the respondents mentioned social adjustment, citing the difficulty in adjusting to being

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[19]Dr. Harold Nugent, a language arts professor at Keene State College and member of the Keene demonstration center steering committee.

away from home, parents, and friends. Other related problems included the need to adjust to dorm life, especially a new roommate, and the sudden disappearance of a home and high school support system. As one freshman put it:

> Leaving my family, and no longer having my parents by my side was very difficult for me. I had to become more responsible, learn how to live on my own, and understand my priorities and when to put them before my social activities. It took awhile, but I finally adjusted.

3. Nineteen percent said academic demands were a problem and recognized that this obstacle was closely related to time management and social adjustment. They perceived lack of adequate skills in math, reading, and writing as major problems along with the need for better study skills, including note taking, typing, and preparing for tests and essay exams. They mentioned also the difference in teaching styles, from motivator to dispenser of information. In the words of one freshman:

> The major obstacle I had to confront in making the transition from high school to college is the amount of homework required by college teachers. For example, the research in English has taken up to 24 hours of constantly studying and writing.

4. Ten percent cited decision making as an obstacle, the concern being the need for more information and advice at both high school and college level to help in choosing a college, a major field of study, and a sequence of courses. One freshman responded:

> The major obstacle I confronted when coming to college was not knowing enough about what was going to happen to me over the next four years. I had a specific goal with no clear guidance to lead me to that goal.

5. Financial management was an obstacle for nine percent of the Keene State freshmen, including the need for more financial aid information and the difficulty of having to work ten to forty hours a week to pay for college and living expenses. According to one freshman:

> There were many transitions which were hard for me, most of them concerned financial aid availability. It's tough for students, like

myself, to support themselves to pay for school. There is not enough funding available.

6. Seven percent of the respondents found no obstacles in making the transition to college.

Students encounter problems in making these transitions, some the result of their own weaknesses and aberrant behavior, some the result of the system that presents obstacles and unreasonable demands as they move from one level to the next.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. School systems should identify and define specifically the transition problems that are unique to the system and to the specific transition points, using the experience of students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents.

> Standardized tests of achievement. . . should be administered at major transition points from one level of schooling to another and particularly from high school to college or work.[20]

B. WHAT ARE THE EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS MAKING TRANSITIONS?

After the most critical transition points have been identified and the specific problems students encounter have been defined and documented, the first task in providing help for students is to clarify and communicate our expectations and standards for each new level in the school progression. One of the most significant findings in the research on effective schools, and much of the new evidence on what goes into effective leadership, is that schools should set high expectations. Students will rise to the level of achievement and performance that is expected of them, as will adults. In this project, each of the demonstration centers sought to clarify their expectations for students as they rise from one level to another. This effort was focused primarily on the troublesome transition points, but was found to be a very useful and helpful activity for transitions at every grade level. How can students progress and rise through the system if we don't tell them what is expected of them? How can we communicate such expectations and standards if we haven't agreed on what they should be? This project brought together, in some demonstration centers for the first time, all those teachers, counselors, administrators and college faculty members at all levels to determine what should be expected of students at each level. These agreements were especially important in the curricular areas (See Section III) where much of the project efforts were concentrated, but they included also the expectations and standards for the unstated social and behavioral dimensions as well. When the transition problems were identified and analyzed, many of the most severe problems were found to be in this area of the "hidden curriculum."

Students need to know our expectations for them. They will know them only if we tell them, explicitly and often. These expectations and standards should be the result of careful, realistic, consideration of the developmental needs of children at each level, recognizing that the intellectual and social maturation of students of the same age may differ significantly. These expectations should be developed by professional staff, well acquainted with students at each level of schooling. The expectations set for each transition point should result from the

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[20]National Commission on Excellence in Education, "A Nation at Risk"

agreement of the lower level which is preparing rising students with the next level which will be receiving them.

Committees in each of the demonstration centers defined these expectations and standards for their own local circumstances for one or more subject areas. These activities are described in Part III of this report. The Keene, New Hampshire, "K-13 Project" committee defined social and behavioral expectations at critical transition points. Their work is included here as an example of similar activities in each center.

From Kindergarten to First Grade

1. Students are able to attend a 20-30 minute lesson without physical activities
2. Students are independent in following directions, completing assignments, making decisions, self-help skills.
3. Students have fine motor control developed enough to print letters and numbers within lines
4. Students are able to follow multiple directions given to a group
5. Students have energy for a full day of school without a rest period
6. Students have mastery of most reading and math readiness skills
7. Students are able to cooperate with peers in a large group
8. Students are willing and able to accept new challenges without undue frustration
9. Students can cope with their world and learn at the same time

From Grade Two to Grade Three

1. Students are able to cope with self-contained classroom
2. Students are able to handle regular homework and complete classroom work
3. Students will be more responsible for independent work
4. Students are expected to follow oral instructions
5. Students are expected to ask appropriate questions

6. Students are expected to work effectively in small groups or with a partner

From Grade Five to Grade Six (Elementary to Middle School)

1. Students will be able to cope with independence at the new level

2. Students will be able to cope with realism, futurism, etc.

3. Students will be able to handle movement from room to room and teacher to teacher

4. Students will be responsible for more homework, for scheduling time, for keeping assignments, for listening, for organization, and for caring for belongings

From Grade Eight to Grade Nine (Middle to High School)

1. Students will have adequate organizational skills for both short and long term assignments

2. Students will demonstrate basic study skills such as note-taking, reviewing, and test preparation

3. Students will consistently complete homework

4. Students will be able to use memory as a learning tool

5. Students will be able to budget time

6. Students will be able to pay attention in class

From Grade Twelve to Thirteen (High School to College)

1. Students will be able to gather information from primary and secondary sources

2. Students will have the ability to conceive ideas about a topic for the purpose of writing

3. Students will be able to engage critically and constructively in the exchange of ideas

4. Students will be able to perform, with reasonable accuracy the computations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using natural numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers

5. Students will be able to identify and solve problems

6. Students will be able to set study goals and priorities consistent with stated course objectives and their own progress and to follow a schedule that accounts for both short and long-term projects

At Gwinnett County, Georgia, the "Elementary to Middle School Transition Committee" met in small groups with representatives from each level. The groups combined to focus on what the expectations were for the students at each level and what could be done to prepare students for the change in expectations at that transition point. The middle school teachers described what they expected sixth grade students to be able to do:

1. Copy assignments on an assignment sheet or pad

2. Keep folders or notebooks for each subject

3. Have necessary materials, such as paper, pencil and books for class

4. Be responsible for asking for make-up work

5. Be responsible for getting notes signed

6. Plan ahead for books and materials because locker break was only allowed twice a day

7. Understand that unfinished work is a zero and full credit is not given for work turned in after the due date

Clarifying expectations and standards for students is a very important early step in strengthening transitions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Sending and receiving schools should collaborate in clarifying their expectations for students making the transition from one level to another. These expectations should be explicit, covering curricular and learning standards, but also including social and behavioral standards as well. The process should involve all school professional staff at all levels.

2. A time and place should be designated in the school curriculum to help students to prepare for their transitions to each succeeding level.

> We need to begin seeing the educational system from the perspective of the people who move through it. This is because changes in the composition of the group moving through the educational system will change the system faster than anything else except nuclear war. If people can begin to SEE the educational system as a single entity through which people move, they may begin to behave as if all of education were related. It seems self-evident that such a perception is good. The educational continuum is much like any other.[21]

C. WHAT SUPPORT DO ALL STUDENTS NEED IN MAKING TRANSITIONS?

All students need support and guidance in crossing over the troubled waters of some of the critical periods in their school years. The amount and nature of the help needed varies to a great degree depending on the level of schooling and students' achievement level and social development.

The seven demonstration centers in this project designed and implemented a vast array of services, programs, and activities intended to strengthen critical transitions and make it possible for students to improve their school performance at all levels. The efforts made in the seven centers were in many ways similar, but many programs were developed in individual centers to meet unique conditions and needs of particular schools and communities. The process used in each center to decide on which programs could most effectively address certain problems was highly individualized. Some centers used "articulation steering committees." Others formed "Implementation Committees" or "K-13 Articulation Committees."

Since all of the seven centers were already fully engaged in the process of moving students successfully through their school years, it is impossible to differentiate between what was in place when the three-year project period began and what was done to strengthen transitions as a result of this project. All of the demonstration centers were chosen because they were already engaged in sound transition activities and they indicated their desire and willingness to strengthen their programs as participants in the project.

This final report will describe briefly all of the separate programs and activities that were utilized in the seven centers to strengthen transitions. Some are common to all the project

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[21] Harold L. Hodgkinson, Institute for Educational Leadership, All One System: Demographics of Education - Kindergarten Through Graduate School.

centers; some are unique to only one. Some are traditional and common to many good schools; some are highly innovative and original. It will not be possible in this report to describe each program in detail, nor will it be possible to identify the center(s) where each of these programs was implemented. Where ever possible, programs which were particularly unique or noteworthy will be identified so that readers might write for more detailed information from the center. (Contact persons are identified in Appendix A.)

These are the programs that were used in the seven demonstration centers to smooth and strengthen school transitions for all students, to the end that their school achievement would improve.

The transition programs described here are grouped as follows:

Publication and Media Presentations
Meetings of Staff
Student Visits
Surveys and Follow-up Activities
Orientation Meetings for Students and Parents
Administrative and Counseling Services

The activities described in this section are, for the most part, those that are not described in other parts of this final report. All of the other sections contain descriptions of additional programs designed to strengthen school transitions for students K-13.

The section which follows will describe additional programs which were developed for "at risk" students who have particular difficulty negotiating these troublesome transitions.

Publications and Media Presentations

1. A faculty committee prepared a handbook for parents and students who were rising to middle school. They also prepared a tape/slide presentation about the middle school (Gwinnett County and Okmulgee, Oklahoma).

2. Middle school students preparing for high school were given a packet which included a student handbook, graduation requirements, a color-code map of the school, and a copy of the student newspaper. The objective was to give incoming students some insight into the social and academic events of a typical week in the high school.

3. Several forms were devised to obtain information from sending schools to help in placement of students at the receiving schools. District-wide guidelines for preparation

and transfer of cumulative records were reviewed and streamlined (Gwinnett County).

4. An elaborate, colorful Pathways folder was developed for students entering ninth grade. The folder contained career information along with choices to be made for educational plans. The Pathways folder provided a road map for students in selecting their education pathway through high school. (Metropolitan School District of Warren Township, Indianapolis, Indiana).

5. A high school guidance newsletter was sent to the homes of all eighth grade students so they and their parents would be informed about high school activities.

6. All schools publish handbooks for students and parents, providing information about curriculum offerings, school policies, facilities, services, and personnel. An excellent example is The Choice Book published by the Gwinnett County Public Schools.

7. As part of in-service activities for middle school teachers, the high school developed and published a list of "in-house transitional activities" for teachers to use in preparing students for high school (See Section VE for more details). They also prepared a "Central Gwinnett High School Dictionary" containing the key words students would need to know to get along in high school. In addition, they published a "fact sheet" with general information about the high school (Gwinnett County).

8. The Director of Guidance, in consultation with curriculum coordinators and counselors, prepared an "Educational Advisement Guide for Students and Parents" which provided a reference for educational planning and careers. It included behavioral expectations for the high school and charted academic expectations for California colleges, technical schools, trade schools and the military (Chino, California).

9. The magazine supplement of a local newspaper was devoted totally to The Game of Life. The local college deans, admissions officers, and high school counselors prepared the contents, intended to clarify post-secondary school opportunities and requirements. The supplement which was received by 91% of the families in the school community, provided information on college testing, graduation requirements, types of post-secondary schools, financial aid, and time tables. Nine post-secondary schools supported the project by taking ads in the supplement (Gwinnett County).

10. High schools developed a profile sheet describing the high school, its program, its student population, its community, and any unusual or significant information about the school to accompany each college application.

Faculty Meetings and Exchanges

1. Faculty committees were formed to address the specific transition problems for students going from elementary to middle school, from middle to high school, and from high school to post-secondary school. These committees planned all the activities which were provided at each of these transition points. (Gwinnett County)

2. Fifth grade teachers in the elementary school met throughout the school year with sixth grade teachers from the middle school to share ideas on teaching methods, curriculum, and expectations. The same teachers were given release time for one-half day to visit teachers at the other level, where they observed textbooks, teaching materials, and classroom procedures. The same teachers met again in groups to discuss the transition problems and agree on how expectations for students rising to the sixth grade in the middle school could be met. Through these visits teachers for the first time were able to observe teaching materials and procedures which their students would use at the next level. Similar meetings and exchange visits between middle school and high school teachers were so positive that close collegial relationships developed across the grade levels. (Gwinnett County)

3. A one-half day visitation was arranged for teachers of like disciplines between middle school and high school. Following the exchange of visits, the teachers met to discuss how articulation between the two levels could be improved. The value of this exchange was that teachers saw that their problems were similar and easier to cope with when information is shared.

4. High school subject area teachers, along with counselors and administrators, met with college faculty and administrators to discuss transition issues, particularly to discuss the college's expectations of its students in the particular subject area. In one such meeting, university faculty pointed out the disadvantage for math students if they have not had any math since their sophomore year. They recommended a refresher or review math course in the senior year.

5. Guidance counselors met with science teachers to develop criteria for placement of students in the high school's

science program. The meetings resulted in much improved placement of students in high school science courses. (Warren Township)

Student Visitations

1. Incoming students were invited to visit their new school and tour the facilities, guided by staff members or students.

2. Selected elementary fifth graders and middle school eighth graders visited their next level schools armed with questions from their classmates. Upon their return these "reporters" shared their observations about academic and social expectations for the following year. (Gwinnett County and Okmulgee).

3. Accompanied by their teachers, eighth grade students visited the high school they would attend. They were warmly welcomed by the principal. The drama and music groups presented a short play. Student council members served as hosts(esses). A slide-tape presentation introduced students to the activities program. Students visited classes in groups of five or fewer to observe student-teacher interaction, teaching methods and classroom atmosphere. Students and teachers at both levels indicated that this orientation was highly successful (Gwinnett County).

4. Recent graduates from the high schools were invited back to their schools to tell upper class students about their college experiences.

Student Surveys and Follow-Up Activities

1. Eighth grade students were surveyed and asked to reveal their greatest fears and apprehensions about the transition to high school. The survey was the basis of re-designing the major components of the orientation program, changing the responsibility for it from a high school program to a shared and cooperative one.

2. High school counselors visited the local state colleges to visit with former students to get their evaluation of their high school preparation for college. This kind of visit resulted in changes in the high school English program. (Warren Township)

Orientation Meetings for Students and Parents

1. Evening meetings for parents and students entering middle or junior high schools and high schools were held to acquaint parents and students with school services, policies, requirements, procedures, and personnel.

2. District wide "college nights" were held for college representatives to meet prospective students (a well established program in all good schools).

3. An "Academic Fair" for students is provided for parents and students in February or early March. Department heads make brief presentations and display materials and texts used in their departments. (Keene)

4. Six orientation (Advising and Registration - OAR) sessions beginning in April and ending in August were provided for new college freshmen and their parents. A typical day included (1) small group meetings with a peer counselor, (2) campus walking tour, (3) ID photographs taken, (4) activities fair, (5) academic advising and course selection, (6) on-line computer registration, and (6) orientation and advising by admissions staff, including financial aid, placement services, housing and student life. (University of Missouri - Kansas City)

Administrative and Counseling Services

1. A tenth grade counselor was identified as a "transition counselor" to assist students coming from the junior high schools (which included ninth grade) and to coordinate all transition activities. This made a much smoother transition with more accurate information conveyed to students. Counselors were more confident in their academic advising. (Warren Township)

2. Counselors and administrators from the "receiving" schools paid visits to the "sending" schools, taking orientation materials, providing information, answering questions, and advising students on course selection.

3. Teachers developed a place in the sixth and seventh grade curriculum to teach organizational and study skills, decision making, and the general "survival skills" needed at the next level school. (Warren Township)

4. The high school counselors met with junior high counselors prior to the time for student scheduling to describe high school offerings and opportunities. Changes in the high school program were emphasized. (Warren Township)

5. A process for Individual Educational Plans (IEP) was implemented to assist students in designing an educational plan to prepare them for secondary, post-secondary, and career. The IEP is developed by counselors in meetings with students and their parents and reviewed and revised as necessary each year. (Saginaw)

6. Members of a Parents Advisory Council call the homes of all incoming freshmen during late August to answer parents' or students' questions. Members of the parents' council offer their services as resource persons for the new students. This program is described in more detail in section VIB. (Keene)

7. A high school counselor worked closely with the adult evening school counselors to resolve the many academic and social problems for students leaving the regular day school program for the adult evening program. (Warren Township)

8. College representatives and admissions counselors visited the high schools to talk with interested upper class students.

9. High school counselors, the project director, the director of guidance, and the superintendent of schools, met with college administrators and admissions officers to discuss transition issues, resulting in an agreement for the high school to obtain waivers from its graduates so that the college could send back information about the student's adjustment in the first year. (Warren Township)

10. The colleges developed a report to inform the high schools about the performance of their graduates at the college. Individual students were not identified, assuring privacy; data was shared in summary form. High school officials found such reports to be very useful. (University of New Hampshire at Durham with Keene High School; Indiana University with Warren Central High School; Oklahoma State and University of Oklahoma with Okmulgee High School; California State Universities with Chino High School; University of Georgia with Central Gwinnett High School)

11. Project Connect at Keene State College, New Hampshire, offers six week seminars taught by college faculty members for gifted and talented students. Two goals intended to contribute to a smoother transition to college are (1) enrichment of high school students, and (2) better communication between high school and college faculties. (Keene)

12. A Freshmen Year Experience (FYE) provided considerable help for students making the transition to college. The program is available but not required of incoming freshmen. The class, team-taught by one academic professor and two from student affairs, has three broad goals: (1) engage students more actively in the learning process, (2) extend learning beyond the classroom, and (3) enrich the students' first semester experience in college. The feedback from faculty and staff has been almost totally positive. Most want to

participate again. (Fall, 1987 was the initial year.) Student participation showed statistically higher overall grade point averages than non-participants. Student attitudes toward their abilities and skills were improved. (Keene State College, Keene)

13. LINK, "your college connection" was a comprehensive pre-college experience to strengthen academic competencies and study skills, and increase self-confidence. This was an intensive seven-week summer preparatory experience designed for students planning on enrolling in college in the fall. The major goal was to help students become more self-confident in handling the academic and social demands of the college experience. According to one student, "LINK has inspired me, encouraged me, and made me feel like I won't experience cardiac arrest in September!" (Keene State College, Keene)

14. Learning Centers were established to address the transition from twelfth to freshman year in college. A Math Center, Writing Process Center, Reading Development Center, and Special Academic Support Services are based on the belief that differences among student performances reveal a variety of stages of academic and personal growth. The Learning Center faculties view these differences as challenges worthy of their best efforts. (Keene State College, Keene)

15. In addition to the traditional school visits and "college fairs," the University of New Hampshire at Durham carries out several other programs to assist students in making the transition to college. In the early fall, UNH holds a two-day workshop for high school counselors to bring them updates on the college division, student services, and admissions policies. During the fall admissions period, the Office of Admissions mails to all high schools a list of the applicants from that school, including: college division for which the student applied, class rank, program of study, SAT results, and the admission decision. Two similar follow-up reports are sent back to the schools in February and April. A fourth report in May lists all students who have paid the enrollment fee, indicating their intent to enroll at U.N.H.

During March and April, UNH sponsors "Explore UNH," a program for students admitted under their Early Notification Policy. The program allows students to sit in on lectures, talk freely with faculty and students, and tour the residence halls.

A "Freshmen Outcomes Report" provides feedback to the high schools concerning the patterns of course selection and achievement of their graduates in comparison with first year outcomes of all freshmen. Students are not identified, but the

report gives a decile rank for each student as well as high school program of study in math, science, foreign languages, and SAT results. The report lists grade point averages for the students' college courses in English, foreign language, mathematics and science, a cumulative GPA, and a school average.

The forty activities and programs described here are only a portion of the effort made by the seven demonstration centers to strengthen transitions for all students. Special programs for "at risk" students, programs involving parents and community members, and students themselves are described in other parts of this final report.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Schools should organize and implement comprehensive programs to assist and support all students in making transitions from one level of schooling to the next. These programs should include publications and media presentations, planning meetings involving all staff involved in any way with the transition, teacher exchanges, student visits and exchanges, orientation meetings for students and their parents, and all the related administrative and counseling services.

> We are still at risk. The absolute level at which our improvements are taking place is unacceptably low. Too many students do not graduate from our high schools, and too many of those who do graduate have been poorly educated. Our students know too little, and their command of essential skills is too slight. Our schools still teach curricula of widely varying quality. Good schools for disadvantaged and minority children are much too rare, and the dropout rate among black and Hispanic youth in many of our inner cities is perilously high. Our ethos of success is missing from too many American schools.[22]

D. WHAT SPECIAL SUPPORT SERVICES ARE NEEDED FOR "AT RISK" STUDENTS?

While the major emphasis in this project was to strengthen transitions for all students, project participants recognized very early that special attention was needed at the critical transition points for those students who were identified as being "at risk." Students "at risk" could be identified by previous teachers as those who were unchallenged, that is, bright but bored, those who had low level basic skills, and those whose behavior or social adjustment were problematic. Students experiencing such problems are likely to experience more difficulty than normal students in making the transition to new buildings, new environments, and new, more challenging situations. Therefore, they may drop out of school or may have their problems exacerbated by the changes thrust upon them. Recognizing these special risks for some students, project schools developed special programs to support and assist them.

1. Chino, California, developed an Opportunity School at the middle school for eighth grade students predicted to have difficulty making the transition to high school. The program employs a small class size which meets for four periods daily with one teacher for special help, bonding, and support.

2. Chino, California, created a similar program at the high school called School Within A School.

3. Gwinnett County, Georgia, conducted a survey among ninth graders who had failed one or more courses in the first semester of high school. Students cited as their primary reasons for failing (1) failure to complete homework,

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[22]William Bennett, Secretary of Education, in American Education:" Making It Work, 1988.

(2) failure to study, (3) failure to understand what was being taught, (4) lack of motivation, and (5) failure on tests. Sixty-three percent of the students answering the survey indicated that they had not asked the teacher for help.

4. As a result of the survey, the Gwinnett County committee on the transition from middle school to high school developed a packet of activities for eighth grade teachers to use to address these failures. The transitional activities were taught across the curriculum for the entire year in preparation for high school and covered (1) study skills, (2) notetaking, (3) active listening skills, (4) handling long-term projects, (5) handling longer and more frequent homework, (6) emphasizing independent work, (7) meeting all responsibilities such as detentions, returning assignments, and self-discipline.

5. Gwinnett County set up a Mission Possible program for the students who failed at the end of their first high school semester. Students were assigned in small groups where trained peer helpers led discussions about their reasons for failure and how they could improve their achievement. Each student was paired with a "buddy" who worked with students at their own pace, usually during lunch periods or after school.

6. Keene, New Hampshire, students assigned new "at risk" students to older "buddy" students to help them with the adjustment to their new school environment. Group counseling sessions were held weekly or bi-weekly during the first semester of high school.

7. Okmulgee students who experienced difficulty in meeting academic expectations were retained or required to participate in remedial programs. The summer remedial program was based on the SRA achievement test from the previous year. During the three-year term of the project, the number of students requiring remedial summer school for English decreased each year from a high of 26 to a low of 17 in the third year. Students who fail three of the five core subjects in the middle school are retained unless they attend summer remediation classes.

8. Saginaw, Michigan, has developed a series of alternative programs at the early elementary level for students not ready developmentally for the transition to the next level (See page 53 for description of these programs). The purpose is to identify developmental problems early and prevent failure later on. These alternative programs strengthen the immature and disadvantaged students for the transition to the next level of their schooling.

9. The Okmulgee, Oklahoma, schools also have a one-year Transition Program for students who have completed kindergarten or first grade but who need extra time to master the required skills. Placement criteria are classroom performance, test scores, teacher recommendations, and rank in the lowest 20% of the class. Transition classes enroll no more than 20 students with close individual attention and regular communication with parents. Students complete the transition year as well as the regular year before going on.

10. At Warren Township, students at grades 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 whose scores fall below an "achievement standard" set by the state of Indiana must attend summer school for remediation or be retained. Eighty hours of remediation are required in the summer school, with a post-test to determine the next year's placement.

11. Warren Central High School created a unique "third dimension" to assist students in making important transitions. This is in addition to the typical in-school suspension rooms or guidance centers. Warren established an Educational Intervention Program, and called it an I.V. Center, which provides services for students who are "troubled" with academic failure or personal setbacks, those who are new to the school, those who seek companionship or are searching for new challenges, or those who are interested in leadership opportunities. The I.V. Center, located near the student cafeteria, is staffed by a coordinator, along with several students each period, who provide friendship, information, advice and support. Students using the I.V. center are referred by their teacher or come on their own.

12. Keene High School is making a study of its dropouts and potential dropouts, (1) defining the magnitude of the problem, (2) developing a profile of the dropouts, (3) analyzing the causes of dropouts, and (4) developing some options and some solutions. The need for this study was prompted by the recognition that school dropouts are students who cannot successfully cope with the problems of transition to ever more challenging and complex levels of schooling.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Special help and support services for "at risk" students defined as failing, attending poorly, dropping out, not adjusting socially, and learning marginally, should be developed in addition to transition help for all students.

2. Such programs should be instituted early in the students' school years and continue through grades K-13 with close monitoring and regular evaluation. Programs could be those described in this section, including special transition classes, transition teachers and counselors, small support groups, alternative programs, peer counselors, tutoring, remedial programs, and other interventions suited to the local situation including special education.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS FOR STRENGTHENING TRANSITIONS

> . . . Colleges must pay more attention to the articulation between the institution and the schools from which students come. College faculties must be the colleagues of the teachers in the schools, learning from them what their students are like and giving them the opportunity to relate professionally to those teaching at the college level. College faculties should visit high schools and invite the teachers from the schools for meaningful visits to college campuses.[23]

A. THE VALUE OF FEED FORWARD AND FEEDBACK

Traditional articulation programs have placed strong emphasis on "feeding forward" all sorts of educational and personal information. Massive cumulative folders follow students from grade to grade and from school to school within most school systems. These "cum folders" contain grade records, achievement test data, personal data, records of parent conferences and honors and recognitions. It may also include very specific check lists or computer records of just where children are in their academic achievement. These records, accumulated over a period of years, become voluminous and unwieldy, but are still considered very important to receiving teachers and their schools. Teachers typically want as much basic information about their students as possible, in order that they can "take the children from where they are" and help them achieve at the next grade level. Feeding forward information about individual students is an accepted, well established practice in most schools. The practice is based upon sound educational theory and has been recognized in this project as an essential ingredient in the transition process.

Given much less importance and sometimes even ignored or neglected in many schools is the need for "feedback" of information as part of the articulation process. Too often teachers and their schools have considered their responsibility ended when the year ends, the records are gathered and filed, and the file-folder is passed along to the next teacher or school. This project has found and can demonstrate that the value of feedback from the receiving teacher or school can be highly beneficial. In fact, it is an essential part of an effective two-way articulation process. The kind of information that is

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[23]William A. Kinnison (President, Wittenberg University), Higher Education and National Affairs, January 28, 1985, p. 7.

fed back must be specific, helpful and constructive. It should be established in a systematic procedure which is understood and accepted by everyone involved. Too often it has been little more than accidental, random comments (or complaints) from receiving teachers over lunch or at "articulation" meetings. Colleges in recent years have gone public with their impressions of the preparation of their in-coming students, leading to reform efforts by state education departments and legislatures. This is not to say that the colleges do not have a case, but the problem is that this information is seldom expressed in specific, constructive terms to the high schools that have prepared the students. Such feedback which over-generalizes how ill-prepared students are for the next grade or level is not useful or helpful.

Critical, undocumented feedback typically is heard with resentment and answered with defensiveness, neither reaction being very positive. This project has found ways to improve and strengthen this aspect of the articulation process.

Why is <u>feedback</u> valuable at all levels K-13 and how should it be used?

1. Teachers need to know the results of their professional efforts as one measure of how effective their instruction and nurturing have been.

2. Teachers and schools have a professional interest in how their students are succeeding at the next level of schooling.

3. Feedback is essential to the communication process which establishes the curriculum to be taught at each grade or level and establishes the expectations of the level receiving the student. Unrealistic or ill-advised expectations can be resolved by systematic communication across levels.

4. Policies and decisions on retention, promotion, acceleration and special placement require both feed forward and feedback.

5. Entire school instructional programs can be evaluated based on feedback. Outcomes-based evaluation programs are available and currently in use. Follow-up studies also provide data on the perceived success of instructional programs.

6. Feedback can provide specific as well as general information that can have significant implications for an instructional program. Adjustments in methodology, materials, time allocations, and goals and objectives can be made, based on feedback.

7. Feedback can reveal in what ways the "unstated social and behavioral expectations" have affected student adjustment at the next level.

The most useful and helpful mechanism for transition feedback in the demonstration centers have been the face-to-face meetings among subject-area teachers of different grades and all levels K-13. Such meetings require time, some of it released from the classroom. Such meetings also required pre-planning and structure so that needed information is available and questions to be addressed are pre-determined. Some of these meetings, prompted by this project, have been characterized as the high points or the most dramatic events of the demonstration period.

Bringing math teachers, K-13, (or any subject) together to discuss what math skills and concepts should be taught at each level was a first-time experience with significant rewards for most project participants. The value of this kind of communication is further explained in Section IIC of this final report. A sixth grade teacher in Gwinnett County put it succinctly. "It's always interesting to me to see how my kids do the next year. It helps me determine if my teaching is on target. I wish we had more opportunities to share this kind of information."

Other feedback mechanisms that project demonstration centers have found useful follow:

1. In Keene, New Hampshire, trimester curriculum meetings are held each year. In addition, grade level meetings are held twice a year to review skills continuums and to establish transition procedures.

2. In Gwinnett County, Georgia, the Gwinnett Educational Management System (GEMS) provides an accumulation of achievement information on every student to feed back on how specific institutional objectives are being achieved.

3. In Gwinnett, district achievement testing (criterion-referenced) provides data for a longitudinal study of student achievement, grades 1-12.

4. In Kansas City, following a survey of math teachers concerning the preparation of students received at each level meetings brought the teachers together from grades K-13 to discuss problem spots in the curriculum as revealed in the feedback process.

5. In one of the project's consulting school districts,the Niles Township High Schools in Skokie, Illinois, the high schools 9-12 have the unique problem of articulating with nine underlying, autonomous elementary school districts (K-8), each

with their own governing board and their own policies and curriculum. For many years, the high schools have sent a summary report of student grades back to the junior high schools each six-weeks grading period. Junior high principals and teachers are able to follow-up on individual students and on their graduates collectively. Curriculum adjustments are made in the interests of giving their graduates the strongest possible preparation for their high school years. Additional articulation meetings bring district representatives together to work through problems and issues.

6. Other project schools have made it a practice to feed back grade information to the sending schools at appropriate times.

7. Outcomes-based evaluation systems have used a variety of feedback information such as achievement test data, student grades, attendance records, drop-out rates, number of credits earned in advanced courses, college-going rates, and other indices of school success.

8. In Keene, teachers from adjacent levels exchange places for a short period to acquaint them with the expectations and demands of the next level.

9. Colleges participating in this project have fed back information about freshmen students to their sending high schools, including the following:

a. University of Georgia to the Gwinnett Central High School (freshmen grade averages);

b. The California University system furnishes Chino and all California schools with both grade point averages and placement test scores in math and language arts; and

c. Indiana University provides Warren Township with grade summaries for their graduates. Warren Township has devised a waiver form that their graduates sign as they leave, giving the receiving university permission to share freshmen grades with the sending high school. This is a protection against violation of the family privacy legislation.

d. Oklahoma State University and the University of Oklahoma provide grade

information of entering freshmen back to their high schools. They include scores of students in basic content area tests. This feedback has proven to be useful in curriculum planning at all levels.

e. In their "Project Two-Way" Keene State College collects 40 fields of information on freshmen, using their POISE computer program (People Oriented Information System for Education). This information includes reading, writing, and math assessments as well as marks in English composition, algebra and the student's GPA. This data (without names) is shared with high schools. The project's goals are (1) improved accommodation of diversely prepared students, (2) increased awareness of strengths and weaknesses of high school preparation courses, and (3) increased collaboration to improve curriculum at both high school and college.

10. College freshmen return to their former schools to provide feedback to juniors and seniors preparing for college.

11. High school counselors visit the colleges to obtain feedback from their recent graduates. Typical of this kind of transition feedback is the annual Indiana University High School University Division Conference where high school representatives get feedback from their most recent graduates.

Some other mechanisms that can provide meaningful feedback to the sending school are as follows:

1. Have students who have moved to the next level write letters to students at the next lower level telling them what to expect and how to prepare.

2. Receiving teachers can meet with sending teachers at the end of the first six weeks to give them feedback on accuracy of placement, social adjustment, achievement and performance.

3. Student newspapers from the receiving school can be sent back to the sending school to acquaint rising students with their next level school's program and opportunities.

4. Performance groups from receiving schools can be sent back to sending schools to demonstrate their skills and talents.

5. Students from the receiving school can return to their former school to advise the next class about what to expect at the next grade or school level.

6. Systematic follow-up of all high school graduates (or even of products of lower level schools) can provide very revealing and sometimes surprising impressions of a school program.

The demonstration centers in this project have found that feedback of information from the receiving teachers or school can provide very significant benefits both for individual students and their schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Feedback of meaningful information should be an integral part of the transition process and should include the following:

   a. Clear, precise information on expectations for achievement at the next higher level;

   b. Specific grade and achievement data that will show where deficiencies and gaps in learning are (Test scores, including specific item analysis, student grades); and

   c. Informal, more qualitative impressions from receiving teachers concerning personal, social, and psychological adjustments of students at their next grade or level.

2. The information to be fed back or forward should be mutually agreed upon by teachers and counselors at both sending and receiving schools.

3. The exchange of information should be systematic, occurring at pre-determined times with persons responsible for supplying information given ample advance notice to insure that desired feedback is accomplished.

4. Cooperative efforts with colleges should be undertaken to obtain feedback which is much more definitive and specific than grades in college subjects and grade point averages in the freshman year.

5. Exchange or sharing of course syllabi or courses of study, final exams, and other assessment instruments should be encouraged.

We are deeply committed to the concept of articulation and have been for many years especially in vocational education. We feel that the young people entrusted to our care will benefit from the efforts we make in articulating programs from one level to the next. It only makes good sense that a clear understanding of expectations be shared by teachers and administrators at all levels.[24]

B. DEVELOPING TRANSITION AGREEMENTS AND ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN LEVELS

Among the many programs and services that aid students in making school transitions, are those more formal agreements and arrangements made at the high school-post high school education point. This type of transition agreement is unique to this level. This project's interest has been primarily with the exemplary manner in which several of the project schools have formalized these arrangements in the vocational education area. Most noteworthy is the excellent experience of the Saginaw, Michigan, schools and their Walter C. Averill Career Opportunities Center which has made articulation agreements with local technical schools in twelve vocational areas. Their students can make the transition to technical college training without interruption or duplication. John Paar, Principal and Director of Vocational Education in Saginaw was instrumental in making these arrangements. Paar was the original demonstration center director for Saginaw, and is now retired.

Saginaw's Averill Career Opportunity Center has articulation agreements with the local community colleges, Delta College and Great Lakes Junior College. Agreements are being negotiated with the local state university, Saginaw Valley State University. Representatives from the Saginaw School District, along with representatives from other surrounding school districts, met with Delta College in the early 1980's to investigate the possibility of articulation. Currently, fourteen high schools and skill centers are involved in articulation with Delta College and many of them are also involved with Great Lakes Junior College. From its inception the program has saved students considerable time and money. In the first four years of the program students earned nearly 600 credits and saved $16,000 in tuition.

The program is directed by an "Articulation Management Team" which is made up of members from participating schools and colleges. The team meets typically twice each year, once in

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[24]John D. Parr, former principal and director of vocational education, from the "Saginaw Perspective," 1986.

October, and once in April or May. The communication among schools involved is invaluable. Public relations coming from the project is also of great value. The management team continually discusses new areas for articulation and methods for streamlining the process.

The following vocational programs are fully articulated:

Accounting	Electronics	Marketing
Auto Mechanics	Engineering Drafting	Nursing
Building Construction	Health Occupations	Welding
Business/Office	Machine Trades	Data Processing

Agribusiness is currently being examined as a new area of articulation. Articulation is predominantly done through vocational classes at the Career Opportunity Center. However, articulation with the comprehensive high schools is also a possibility, particularly in business education.

How It Works

Through these agreements students are notified of articulation opportunities early in their high school years. Individual educational plans are developed for each student under the guidance of parents and counselor in the sixth grade and updated in the ninth grade. It is at these planning sessions that students are told of these vocational articulation opportunities. During fall and winter, students are reminded again about the articulation program. When students apply, their teachers review the students' mastery of the tasks that were agreed upon in the articulation agreement. This takes place in the early spring. At the end of the course, the school verifies that the student has mastered the mutually-agreed-upon objectives. The student then enrolls in the next higher course at the college level. Articulation credit is awarded only when the student satisfactorily completes the next higher course. Typically, a "C" grade is required for articulation credit. Appendix J shows the articulation agreement between the Walter C. Averill Career Opportunity Center and Delta College.

For these articulation agreements to function successfully, the objectives and skills requiring mastery must be continually examined and updated, particularly in high-tech areas. This process is accomplished through advisory committees made up of members who know about educational needs and job market conditions in each vocational area. Information from student surveys is also taken into account. Follow-up interviews are conducted with business and industry personnel. Advisory committees help determine equipment and laboratory needs. Since this articulation program is in the area of vocational education, the qualifications and certification requirements of the teachers

are also reviewed. Members of these committees must have working knowledge of other articulated areas as well. Local colleges and school districts recognize that a knowledge of related skill areas is important.

The School District of the City of Saginaw recently established an advisory committee to investigate industrial technology programs. The committee had sixteen members, half of whom were school district employees, the other half management and union representatives from local industry.

Secondary/post-secondary transitions have been successfully strengthened by the kind of formal articulation program described above. Evaluation continues to reveal that eliminating duplication of content, as well as reducing cost to students, is the most important part of the program. Making articulation agreements of this kind known to students early in their educational planning career is vital. Such early planning is reducing the traditional division between vocational education and regular education. Saginaw's program recognizes that technology is rapidly becoming a content area of its own, and that education in a technologically sophisticated world requires cooperation between the K-12 district and local post-secondary opportunities.

In the Gwinnett County, Georgia, School District, the high schools have an arrangement with Gwinnett Area Tech, a post secondary vocational school, to give the GED on a scheduled basis to students who are 17 years of age, out of school for at least four months and who did not complete their high school education. For students who are unable to pass the GED, remedial courses are available through Gwinnett Area Tech. The students do not, therefore, have to return to the high school or enroll in adult education classes before proceeding with their vocational education.

In cooperation with the State Board of Education in Oklahoma, the Okmulgee School District has developed procedures for concurrent enrollment for senior high school students. This program is available in all accredited Oklahoma high schools and colleges or universities in the Oklahoma State system of higher education. In Okmulgee, the Oklahoma State University Technical Branch is closely aligned with Okmulgee High School. The process of concurrent enrollment is a formalized one, requiring certain pre-requisites. High school students must have completed their junior year to be eligible. At the Oklahoma State University Technical Branch, students then are eligible to take courses in economics, English, business, history, humanities, mathematics, science, psychology, speech, and information processing. Specifically, requirements for students include:

* In addition to high school graduation, students must meet the published criteria for admission to the selected college or university.

* Students must be enrolled in less than a full-time load (fewer than six (6) course units per semester) at the high school they are attending.

* Students must be eligible for graduation from high school no later than the spring semester of their senior year.

* A high school student admitted under the provisions set forth above may enroll in a combined number of high school and college courses per semester not to exceed a full-time college workload of nineteen (19) semester credit hours. For purposes of calculating workload, one high school unit course is equivalent to three semester credit hours of college work.

* Work completed at the college level is not counted toward meeting high school graduation requirements.

* Nothing in this regulation supersedes the policies and/or regulations adopted by a local board of education concerning high school graduation requirements.

* A senior must be enrolled for at least four (4) hours of the school day if the home school is to receive full funding for the student's attendance. A combination of home high school and college enrollment equivalent to four (4) hours will constitute a full day of attendance for the senior student.

These formalized agreements in the vocational areas at Saginaw, the concurrent enrollment at Okmulgee, and the GED preparation program at Gwinnett are but three examples of well-articulated programs involving high school and post-high school education. The project did not deal with some of the well known and well established formalized articulation programs such as the advanced placement program which brings college level courses to the high school. Those who do well in such courses receive college credit and/or advanced placement when they enter college. The AP Program is an excellent example of providing a smooth transition for very able students between high school and college.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Formally articulated programs in vocational areas (and other areas as well) between the secondary and post-secondary school should be developed for the following reasons:

    * Students avoid repetition of previously mastered skills.

    * Students save both money and time.

    * Communication between K-12 systems and higher education is opened.

    * The opportunity for collegial program design and goal setting is enhanced.

    * The design of such programs recognizes the expertise of professional educators as well as the contributions of community and business/industry personnel.

2. Formal agreements such as those suggested here can best be arranged with groups of high schools, county-wide or even state-wide.

I have four students who are tutors for the peer tutoring program. These students have developed a higher level of self-esteem. They feel very proud to be a tutor. The importance of this role reflects not only on the younger students, but on the tutors' classmates as well. This has been a motivating experience for the tutors; they feel obligated to acquire the knowledge they need to fulfill this role. They have taken the responsibility to obtain any information they need to help the students they are tutoring. This has also been a very positive reinforcer for the acceptable behavior we encourage.[25]

C. HOW STUDENTS HELP STUDENTS IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS

Demonstration centers in this project found that involving students in the planning and implementation of school transition activities proved to be one of the most effective and beneficial techniques used to strengthen school-to-school transitions. Some of these student-to-student programs are described here.

STUDENT REPORTERS

In Gwinnett County, Georgia, fifth grade teachers had observed in previous years that students appeared shy and overwhelmed when they visited the middle school. The Elementary to Middle School Transition Committee suggested that teachers select fifth grade reporters to visit the middle school and report findings to their classmates in the familiar surroundings of their own elementary classrooms. Using the criteria of good behavior and average or above average grades, each fifth grade teacher selected two students to act as reporters. The reporters' classmates generated a list of questions that they wanted answered during the reporters' visits. This gave the student reporters a focus for their visits and identified the major concerns of the fifth graders.

Student reporters began their day by riding the buses with middle school students. (In this metropolitan county, separate elementary, middle and high school bus schedules are used.) Upon arrival the students reported to the media center where they were welcomed by counselors and administrators. To assist the reporters in gathering information, the middle school provided them an activities book. The reporters were given a class schedule for the day and were escorted to an assigned homeroom. They were instructed to act as sixth grade students all day. At

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[25]Statement from Rebecca True, a sixth grade teacher in Brookview Elementary School in Warren Township.

the end of the day, the reporters convened in the media center for a de-briefing and a written evaluation of the day.

The reporters returned to their own classrooms the next day and shared information about their experiences with their fifth grade classmates. Teachers reported that interest and excitement was so high among the students that regular classwork had to be delayed until the reporters had made a full report to their classmates and answered all their questions. Teachers also reported that when students participated in their annual visit to middle school (approximately two weeks later) there was less anxiety and more eagerness to see first-hand the things the reporters had described. Two forms used by elementary classes after their visits to the middle school are shown in Appendix K on pages 152-154.

PEER LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Also in Gwinnett County Schools a Peer Leadership Program was created at the high school level to ease students' transition into high school. To implement this program, a group of six successful high school students were trained in interpersonal skills, reflective listening, verbal communication and leadership skills.

These six students visited the eighth grade study skills classes at the middle school to provide information and to discuss pertinent concerns and fears of the middle school students. The sessions were conducted during a regular class period so that the middle school teacher could prepare the students for the high school students' visits. The peer leaders also met separately with eighth grade teachers to share ideas that teachers should reinforce in their classes. This activity was repeated with each group of eighth graders during their six-weeks study skills classes.

Informal evaluations from staff and students indicated that the sessions were informative and contributed to a smoother transition for students. The middle school students thought the information was valuable because: (1) it came from students who had previously been at the middle school, (2) it was expressed in their language, (3) it was concerned with student questions and not just with academic information, and (4) it was easier to ask questions of another student than an adult. The high school students also benefited from this experience in several ways. The high school students said that the experience caused them to reflect over their own maturity and growth since leaving middle school. The high school students enjoyed acting as peer leaders to the middle school students. All the high school students indicated that they wished a similar program had been in effect when they were middle school students.

CROSS-AGE PEER TUTORING

Research indicates that cross-age peer tutoring is a cost-effective way to raise reading and mathematics scores, more cost effective, in fact, than computer-assisted instruction, smaller class sizes, or increased learning time.[26] Cross-age tutoring not only gives students opportunities to work with each other, but it also shifts the learning beyond the teacher to the students themselves.

At Warren Township in Indiana, tutors were selected from a group of fifth and sixth graders who were experiencing academic and self-concept problems. The tutees selected were first grade students who were experiencing difficulty in acquiring reading and mathematics skills.

The tutors were trained after school in proper reading strategies and helping skills. The tutors signed a commitment form which was tied to an incentive or reward system (involving an educational item the student works toward in his/her tutoring assignment). Each tutor met with the tutee two times per week after school for approximately one hour. A sample time schedule for the tutor-tutee team is listed below.

2:00-2:30.....First Grade - Snack time
Tutors meet with the first grade teacher for instruction before coming to the cafeteria for their snack and to pick up their tutee

2:30-2:50.....First tutoring session

2:50-3:00.....Tutor reads aloud to tutee

3:00-3:20.....Second tutoring session

3:20-3:30.....Tutor writes a "Report" to the teacher for the assignment folder. Tutee gets ready to go home on the township activity bus

The results of the cross-age peer tutoring program have been promising. Some of the problem students at the fifth and sixth grade levels have become less of a behavior problem because they feel they must set an example for their students. First grade tutees feel very special during their time with their tutors. First graders have become more aware of their surroundings, and school attitudes have improved as well as their academic achievement. Further evidence of the positive reception of this program is reflected in these comments by a teacher and a student:

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[26]Practical Research, November 1984.

A First Grade Teacher: "The peer tutoring program has been beneficial to two of my first grade boys who are in one of my lower reading groups. Peer tutoring has helped both boys improve their reading. They enjoy the opportunity to play learning games which gives them more practice in phonics and vocabulary. The boys eagerly anticipate their day of tutoring. They benefit from the extra positive attention they are receiving from the program."

A Fifth Grade Student: "Peer tutoring is important because I don't want the first graders to have as much trouble as I'm having. I enjoy tutoring because the first graders are so little and cute."

EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION PROGRAM (IV CENTER)

The IV Center is a program that provides services to students new to Warren Township. A unique feature is the assignment of a full time coordinator (licensed counselor) to train and supervise students who work in the IV Center. The counselor trains students in the areas of tutoring, listening, orientating, and decision making. Peer facilitators are trained to take attendance, orient new students, tutor peers, take phone messages, secure extended-illness homework, be positive role models, monitor tests, read tests, serve as tour guides and hosts, and work with non-English speaking students in the English as a Second Language Program. Peers may be sent to work with a student in a teacher's room or may work in a one-on-one setting in the IV Center with students referred by their teachers.

There are no grade restrictions for students to be peer facilitators. Behavior histories have not been able to identify the best peer facilitators. Combinations of "preppies," "jocks," "straights," and "heads" have all been successful peer helpers in the past five years. The students who train as peer facilitators receive one-half credit per semester for their participation in the training phase and the field experience.

The IV Center with its peer counseling and tutoring service provides a means for students to befriend other students. Friendships are formed while personal, academic, social and home problems are discussed and solutions analyzed. Feelings of alienation from the culture and from the school are lessened because the students have a friend to whom they can turn. The IV Center provides a transition place for students and prevents them from getting lost or neglected in a large high school.

"BUDDY" SYSTEM

Both Gwinnett County and Keene High School have assigned older students to serve as "buddies" to new, younger, and less secure students having difficulty with their new school environment. This program, called "Mission Possible" in Gwinnett County, is designed for students who have failed one or more subjects in their first semester of high school. The buddies not only help them in their transition to high school but also tutor them in their weak subjects, usually during lunch hours or after school. Both of these student programs include meetings in small groups where students can discuss their fears and apprehensions and compare their impressions and adjustment problems.

ORIENTATION ADVISING AND REGISTRATION (OAR) AT UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI - KANSAS CITY

Entering college for most freshmen is an anxiety-filled experience. The University of Missouri - Kansas City (UMKC) has designed a special program for college freshmen. Virtually the entire campus is involved in the orientation advising and registration (OAR) program. The central idea of the program is that students will learn best from students who have already been there. The program's theme, "students helping students," emphasizes this concept. The student life office, the enrollment service office, the peer counselors, the university center staff and the financial aid office form the cadre of university personnel involved in this program. All freshmen are required to attend the O.A.R.

UMKC offers six O.A.R. sessions beginning in April and ending in August. A typical orientation day schedule includes the following activities: (1) doors open and check in at 7:30 a.m.; program begins at 8:30 a.m., (2) small group meeting with peer counselor, (3) campus walking tour, (4) university ID card photos taken, (5) lunch break and activities fair, (6) academic advising and course selection, and (7) on line computer registration. Concurrently, programs on financial aid, counseling, and placement services, campus housing and student life are conducted for parents. Early in the new term the incoming freshmen are invited to visit with their specific enrollment service coordinator to discuss any concerns or problems and to plan for the next term.

As part of the orientation, a special edition of the student newspaper is published. The Orientation News features pictures and a brief biographical sketch of each peer counselor who will be part of the orientation program. UMKC makes every effort to acquaint freshmen with their new surroundings by providing support through currently enrolled students. By requiring all students to attend orientation, the transition process from high school to college is smoother and less traumatic.

SUMMARY

Systems and institutions that have involved older or more advanced students in preparing younger students have found it both productive and valuable for all students involved. Students in the leadership positions feel the responsibility for role modeling and for communicating accurate information to the younger students. Students who receive the information report feeling more comfortable in asking questions and seeking advice. These students also enjoy the friendship and recognition given to them by the older students.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Older, more mature, and experienced students should be used as peer helpers or tutors in strengthening school transitions for students.

2. Students used as peer helpers will need careful training to prepare for their role and close supervision during their participation.

3. Students serving as peer helpers should be given appropriate recognition, even consideration of school credit.

> High schools do not carry on their work in isolation. They are connected to elementary and junior high schools and to higher education, to industry and businesses, to state and federal governments that provide support, and, above all, to the communities that surround them. In the end, the quality of the American high school will be shaped in large measure by the qualilty of these connections.[27]

D. PERPETUATING TRANSITION PROCESSES INTO THE FUTURE

Although the efforts to strengthen transitions were concentrated in the three-year term of this project, the demonstration schools were well aware that good articulation is not a transitory process. Programs and procedures developed for this project will be perpetuated in the years to come. Strong articulation will continue because policies and procedures will remain in place; personnel will be assigned, and machinery and systems will remain intact. At the same time project schools recognize that articulation is an evolving process with circumstances and changing student populations requiring constant review and evaluation in every district.

During the term of this project, demonstration centers established steering committees, "transition" committees, and "bench mark" committees to seek ways to strengthen transitions. These committees have done their work, creating and implementing all of the transition strategies that are described in this final report. These ad hoc committees should become standing committees to insure that the articulation process is perpetuated into the future. School districts will need to make specific provision to guarantee that successful programs will be continued.

A statement of philosophy, adopted by the Board of Education, would be the first step in insuring the continuation of good articulation practices. It need not be definitive, but it could be a policy pronouncement that establishes on record that transitions are critical and that provisions should be made to insure students' successful negotiation of these sometimes troublesome steps in their school years. To implement such a policy, governing boards will need to provide budgetary support (1) for special personnel assigned the responsibility for overseeing transition programs and issues, (2) for committee work, and (3) for released time required for teachers when the essential communication between levels is conducted. Any time teachers are available and free from classroom duties (such as

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[27]Boyer, Ernest, High School, A Report on Secondary Education in America, Harper and Row, New Yori, 1983, p. 251.

institute or in-service days) may be designated for transition activities.

An essential ingredient in strong, on-going transition procedures will be designating some key person on the professional staff to be responsible for carrying out activities. This person should be at the administrative level or a counselor reporting directly to a building principal. In larger districts, a central office administrator may be the appropriate person to be authorized to call planning meetings, approve programs, schedule activities, and supervise the implementation of the entire transition program for all levels. Such broad responsibility for district persons working across the range of K-13 grades would need to have a significant time allotment in their job descriptions to carry out such duties effectively.

Transition activities cannot be haphazard and happenstance, with one school or one level not knowing or not coordinated with the other schools or levels in the same system. This "Educational Connections" project has demonstrated that strong transitions don't just happen by accident. Programs must be planned and coordinated. One level of schooling cannot place a high value on strong transition programs if the next level does not see it as important or chooses not to participate. There is no articulation if one level does not attend planning meetings, does not prepare necessary information, or does not communicate. The experience of this project has shown that there is greater need and greater interest in transitions by the receiving schools than by the sending schools, who may see that their primary responsibility is ended when their students move on. Sending teachers and schools do have a significant, impelling professional responsibility to participate in transition activities. This fact may argue for having a district-level administrator responsible for coordinating all transition activities.

Building a strong transition program and keeping it in place for year-to-year use, will require a carefully considered calendaring of events. All involved should know and agree about when certain events take place, when certain meetings are held, and when certain information is exchanged. This kind of planning will insure that strong transition procedures are perpetuated from year to year. A planning calendar developed for project activities in Gwinnett County is shown in Appendix L on pages 155 and 156.

Closely related to this over-all plan for school-to-school transitions is the need for special assistance for individual students who are moving into a new school at a time when normal activities are not being offered. With our transient population, schools must provide help for students who are transferring, not from school to school, but from one school community to another.

These students should not be left to their own devices in making this adjustment. Step-by-step procedures should be in place for these students and any students who, because of retention, acceleration, misplacement or re-districting, are out of step with their classmates.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Schools should have in place policies and procedures which will perpetuate strong transition programs (K-13), including: statements of philosophy and goals for effective transitions, adequate budgetary provision, key personnel designated and responsible for the program, ample time to conduct transition activities, and well-established and understood events and time lines for all activities intended to strengthen transitions.

2. Schools should make and keep in place special orientation programs for students who are new to the school community or who are changing levels or schools at non-traditional times or in atypical ways.

3. Policies and procedures for effective transitions should be regularly reviewed and evaluated to insure that they remain effective and viable.

4. School transitions for students should be just as important an organizing principle as the efforts to plan an articulated curriculum.

As I talk to education leaders, both here and throughout the country, I become convinced that we are close to a fundamental rethinking of the way teaching works in America. We are ready to build on the tough standards we have created in the past three years. With an expanded pool of talented teachers, we can explore ways to empower teachers to do their job better. We can get teachers more involved in professional decisions within the school. We can help teachers better share their talents and knowledge with their colleagues.[28]

E. TRAINING THE STAFF FOR STRONG TRANSITIONS

All participants in the project, "Strengthening School Transitions K-13" cited that one of the most valuable activities inherent in the project was the opportunity provided to teachers across the grade levels, from the kindergarten teacher to the college professor, to meet with one another and compare and share attitudes about curriculum, teaching methodologies, and student responses.

Primary and elementary teachers are traditionally more student oriented; they teach the student a wide variety of subjects -- language arts, mathematics, reading, science, health, social science, physical education, music, art, as well as social skills. Beginning in seventh grade, teachers become more subject isolated in their assignments and they become increasingly subject (as opposed to student) oriented. When secondary and college level teachers meet with elementary and primary teachers, a mixture of subject and student oriented teaching philosophies and methodologies are exchanged.

This project provided opportunities for teachers across the grade levels to meet with one another as well as with administrators, counselors, support staff, and parents. They exchanged information about (1) curriculum priorities, (2) student outcome expectations, and (3) difficult transition points. Although these discussions proved to be very beneficial they were not sufficient to provide teachers with the specific skills needed to assist students in negotiating the troublesome transitions.

Gwinnett County, Georgia, found it very advantageous to have teachers at connecting levels visit each other during the school day. Teachers were released for these one-half day visits to see (1) the instructional program in progress, (2) the organization

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[28]Governor Thomas H. Kean, New Jersey

of the school day, (3) teacher-student interaction, (4) student responsibility for materials, and (5) school activities. Such visits helped sending teachers prepare their students for the transition to the next level. Gwinnett also prepared a concise list of important "in-house" transitional activities which they asked teachers to emphasize in the spring quarter to prepare eighth graders for high school. The list was headed:

"Transitional Activities to Note!!"

1. Offer study skills units.
2. Emphasize note taking skills.
3. Increase lectures, and emphasize more active listening.
4. Make-up policies for tests, homework and other work can be made more stringent.
5. During spring quarter, give some mid-quarter or final exams.
6. Increase the number of long-term projects.
7. Increase the use of essay questions on tests.
8. Give more homework.
9. Allow more social time.
10. Reduce the use of behavior contracts.
11. Place more emphasis on mature behavior and self-discipline.
12. Emphasize more independent work.
13. Stress the importance of composition and spelling in all subjects--academics and exploratory.
14. Require assignments to be turned in on time, or, implement the penalty of lowering the score.
15. Encourage students to meet all responsibilities--i.e. detentions, returning signed papers, etc.

They also provided middle school teachers with a "Central Gwinnett High School Dictionary" (one page) which contained the key words that freshman students would need to know when they move on to the high school, along with a CGHS Fact Sheet (one page) explaining basic facts about the school's schedule, calendar, grading system, graduation requirements, and important school rules. Through these in-service programs for teachers, Gwinnett saw better cooperation between levels, more trust, and a better understanding of what was expected from students at the next level.

The Warren Township schools in Indiana used the TESA program (Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement) to train teachers for the difficult transitions made by large numbers of new students coming from a neighboring district as the result of court-ordered desegregation. This program strengthened the abilities of Warren teachers to assimilate a large number of new students from culturally different neighborhoods and from many diverse sending schools. The TESA Staff Development model was used to ensure fair treatment and full opportunity for the

students involved in the transition into a totally new school environment. Since 1982, 42 percent of the Warren staff has successfully completed the training. Warren teachers believe that the TESA interaction model in the classroom has resulted in academic gain for over 50 percent of students designated as "high" or "low" students at the beginning of the program.

Warren Township has also developed a strong program for the induction of new teachers into their system, believing that orientation about the mission, the climate, the curriculum and the instructional program is imperative for the success of the new teacher. Their objective is to orient new teachers to their system so thoroughly that the teachers feel that they belong, that they are fully informed, and that they have a sense of responsibility to the students and to the school system. Acquainting new teachers about transition activities is part of this orientation.

Curriculum planning for stronger transitions was a major undertaking in each of the project demonstration centers. Most of the centers learned that teachers needed some training and some help in constructing the kind of coordinated, sequential curriculum that took students across transition points. Many teachers were not prepared for this work. Both Chino, California, and Saginaw, Michigan schools appointed curriculum coordinators to direct this work. In Chino the coordinators were trained first in curriculum writing and state curriculum frameworks, and they in turn trained their teachers. Dr. Mary Diez, consultant on assessment for this project, conducted workshops on assessment in most of the demonstration centers.

As a result of this project, Okmulgee, Oklahoma schools found improved understanding and consensus among classroom teachers and curriculum supervisors for sequence and continuity of curriculum at all levels. The kind of intensive professional work that engaged teachers, supervisors, counselors and administrators is the highest order of in-service improvement that schools can provide. Projects such as this build collegiality, sharpen skills, sensitize staff to student problems, heighten mutual respect, and in general improve professional service - all aims of good in-service programs.

Project participants recognized that the kind of experience, training, and know-how achieved for teachers in service is lacking in most of the teacher training programs around the country. Too little is said and very little is taught about helping students make the transitions from one level of schooling to another.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Schools should provide in-service training for all teachers to prepare them to be of more assistance to students making transitions. Teachers should understand the nature of their responsibilities whether they are sending or receiving students through transitions. In-service training can include the traditional workshops and seminars but can also offer inter-school visitations, regular meetings with colleagues at the next level (or across all levels), and sharing of publications prepared to acquaint sending teachers with the next level.

2. The highest level of in-service training and professional improvement can be achieved by getting teachers involved in curriculum planning, assessment of student achievement, and program evaluation - along with specific programs designed to help students through critical school transitions.

3. Teacher training institutions should include in their courses on curriculum and methodology the major components of the transition process and what the teachers' roles and responsibilities will be.

VI. INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY IN THE TRANSITION PROCESS

> Formal education is most appropriately viewed as a continuous process beginning with the primary grade and extending through the highest level that a student's ability and resources can carry him. This is to say that one must not visit the elementary school on the one hand and the university on the other as separate and distinct segments of the educational process. Instead, these organizational units must be viewed as administrative divisions that should in no way impede or interrupt the process of formal education, which has as its base a common body of knowledge that received greater dilineation as one progresses through successive stages of development.[29]

A. SCHOOL POLICIES AND THEIR EFFECT ON STUDENT TRANSITIONS

School transitions from grade to grade or from level to level have traditionally been based on the students' age, time spent in school, and on grades. Typically, students advance through the school years, moving up one grade level each year. If moving to the next higher grade means moving to a new school, that transition is made along with age and class mates. "Holding back" students and having them repeat a grade, or placing them in special remedial or transitional programs is a decision that is weighed heavily by teachers, parents, and administrators. Often times "social promotion" kept students with their age and classmates even though their achievement progress did not warrant it. The thinking was that grade retention would be socially, psychologically and emotionally damaging to the child. Promotion, therefore, in many schools was virtually automatic for all students each year.

The national reform movement has changed much of this thinking, and the goals of this project have been reflected in the plans and policies on retention and promotion in the demonstration centers. An objective of this project has been to "define expectations and standards more clearly for the transition of students from one level to another, basing these standards not so much on time spent and credits earned but on specific content, knowledge, skills development, and concept mastery. The goal will be to define student achievement in terms of qualitative standards rather than quantitative measures."

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[29]Dorothy E. Jenkins, Vice President, Post-secondary American School Counselor Association, at their annual convention in Alexandria, VA, March 19, 1983.

Schools in this project have sought ways to determine the appropriate time for students to be promoted, retained, remediated, or accelerated based on the students' achievement as well as on other factors. At the same time, these decisions have in some states been taken out of the hands of local school districts when state legislatures have mandated proficiency testing programs or minimum competency exams at certain grade levels and have even prescribed the standard at which students must achieve before they can move to the next grade. This has prevailed particularly at the transition point of high school graduation, where states have prescribed what level of achievement students must have to receive a regular diploma. Colleges have for many years required certain achievement levels for performance on qualifying exams as part of their admissions requirements.

The local authority for districts to provide policy, regulations and guidelines for the issues of promotion-retention, placement, and assessment, is primarily derived from state legislatures, appellate court decisions, and the federal constitution. Appellate court decisions have upheld that:

> The establishment and maintenance of standards for the promotion of pupils from one grade to another, and for their continuance as members of any particular class, is a part of the care management of the school vested in the school authorities. The only limitation is that regulations in this area must be reasonable.[30]

Schools in this project have detailed, comprehensive policies on promotion, retention, acceleration, and placement, all set by their local boards of education. Recent reform legislation from the states have heavily influenced these local policies.

Gwinnett County's policy expresses their philosophy.

> PROMOTION, RETENTION, ACCELERATION, PLACEMENT
>
> The Gwinnett County Board of Education strongly believes that students should advance to the next highest grade level annually. However, it is recognized that under certain circumstances retention may be considered for some students. All aspects of the student's intellectual, emotional, social and physical development must be evaluated before retention is recommended. The practice of retaining students for athletic purposes (red shirting) is prohibited.

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[30] 1968 Am. Jur 2d, Section 215

Further, the Board of Education recognizes and supports the contention that students come to the public schools with varying degrees of academic ability, maturation and achievement levels. Therefore, every effort will be made to place students in learning situations which will provide them with a maximum challenge consistent with their ability to succeed. Students who have attained the stated supported age for grade placement may be accelerated or promoted in advance of their regular class only if this is in the best interest of the student.

The procedures which accompany this policy are very detailed and spell out the criteria to be used at each level, who should be involved in the decisions and the appeal procedure to be used if parents are not in agreement with decisions. Parts of this procedure are in Appendix M on pages 157-162.

At the high school level students not passing the Georgia Basic Skills Test are awarded a certificate of attendance instead of the high school diploma. At other grade levels non-academic factors that must be considered in placing students at grade level include:

1. Academic achievement in all subject areas, especially basic skills mastery.
2. Chronological age
3. Mental ability
4. Work/study habits
5. Physical development
6. Social maturity/peer relationships/adult relationships.
7. Emotional maturity/impact on self concept
8. Degree of initiative/effort demonstrated
9. Attendance record
10. Availability of remedial resource
11. Placement of siblings

The Warren Township, Indiana, policy on promotion-retention follows:

Promotion-Retention

The Metropolitan School District of Warren Township is dedicated to the continuous and progressive educational development of each student enrolled in the public schools of the community. Students are placed in the educational system at the appropriate level which best provides for their academic, social and emotional development. Placement of students is the responsibility of the professional staff.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade, course to course, and subject to subject after successfully demonstrating performance requirements established for each step of the school program. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the individual student. Exceptions may include repeating a complete grade, repeating a complete course, and/or re-scheduling in a required course.

Promotions and retentions in the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township will comply with Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress regulations.

Final determination of the student's promotion or retention will rest with the school administration.

Complying with the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP) as indicated in the Warren policy, means that students tested in grades 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 who do not pass at a state-prescribed achievement standard, must either attend a remediation program in summer school (80 hours) or be retained. Students are tested again at the conclusion of summer school to determine their grade placement. Local school districts in Indiana have the option of mandating summer school for high school students.

The retention policy in the Okmulgee, Oklahoma, demonstration center contains some of the same elements, and also includes some criteria for retention and procedures for implementation:

Okmulgee City Schools
Retention Policy

1. Notification to parent of student who is not progressing satisfactorily.

   A. Progress report on 5th week of first nine weeks (Thursday)

   B. Parent conference/report cards first nine weeks

   C. Progress report on 5th week of second nine weeks (Thursday)

   D. Report cards first semester

   E. Progress report 5th week of third nine weeks (Thursday)

   F. Parent conference/report cards third nine weeks

G. Final progress report on 5th week of fourth nine weeks (Thursday)

H. End of year report cards second semester

2. Criteria for retention.

A. Elementary level: teacher-made tests, standard achievement tests, daily work, maturity level, parent request, teacher recommendation, and grades.

B. Middle School level:

1. The same criteria as elementary level plus a student who fails 3 out of 5 core subjects (Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Reading) will be retained in that grade level.

2. If a student fails 3 out of the 5 core subjects, and completes 2 (of the 3 that he/she failed) in a summer school session, he/she will be promoted to the next level.

C. High School level:

1. High school students are classified based upon the number of credits completed.

2. The minimum number of credits for each level is as follows:
* 4 credits for sophomore status
* 9 credits for junior status
* 14 credits for senior status
* 20 credits to graduate

*These requirements are 1 credit hour less than the average needed to graduate

D. No student will be retained in excess of 2 years (grades 1-5).

3. Building level committee decision to determine students to be retained.

A. Letter of notification concerning committee meetings: dates, time, and place.

B. Committee made up of a minimum of two (2) teachers, one (1) counselor, one (1) administrator, parent(s), and other personnel with pertinent information concerning the student.

C. The decision to retain a student will be made by the majority vote of the committee.

D. Official notification to parent via certified mail to inform parent of committee decision and copy in student's file.

The criteria for retention of students in elementary and middle school level in Chino, California are similar to Okmulgee, Oklahoma. Chino students earning a high school diploma must pass a locally determined "proficiency" test. (Each local California School Board determines its own level of proficiency and assessment instrument.) In Chino the proficiency test is the nationally normed Stanford Achievement Test. Parent conferences for students whose achievement lags toward meeting the minimum proficiency standards begin as early as fourth grade as required by the state.

The Saginaw, Michigan policies on promotion and retention are as follows:

Students: Promotion of Pupils

In general, in order to graduate from the Saginaw Public Schools, a student must have attended six or more years of elementary school (in addition to kindergarten), completed three or more years of junior high school, and completed the prescribed number of courses in senior high school. Exceptions to these time requirements may be made by the Superintendent.

Promotion from one grade to another, if the pupil is so classified, occurs at the end of the school year. A natural consequence of classification on the basis of chronological age is a normal year-by-year progression into the successive grades. Departures from this policy may be made based upon the recommmendation of the teacher with approval of the principal when the total development of the pupil would be aided by reclassification to an earlier grade, repetition of the same grade, or by acceleration. In the secondary schools, when a pupil is making less than a satisfactory adjustment to his grade level, he may be directed to repeat all or part of his grade level. Final authority to assign students at any level or grade rests with the Superintendent of Schools.

Guidelines for Placement

A child should/could be retained if all these conditions exist:

1. The teacher feels that retention will benefit the child.
2. Minimum grade requirements of which the child and the parents are aware have not been met.
3. There is documentation showing evidence for the need for retention.
4. Parents have been properly notified in writing at the end of the first semester, at the end of the second parent-teacher conference, and at the end of the school year.

A child should/could be retained because of <u>one or a combination of the following</u>:

1. Areas and scope of difficulty with academic work.
2. Socially immature behavior.
3. Poor work habits.
4. Young age.
5. Excessive absenteeism.
6. Incomplete work.
7. Unsatisfactory test scores.
8. Any other educationally sound reason.

In Keene, New Hampshire, the "nonpromotion" is less formal and not so detailed. The board of education "subscribes to the fact that, whenever possible, measures be implemented to insure that a child encounter successful experiences throughout his school years, and as a last resort, nonpromotion may occur only after all other <u>existing</u> alternatives have been completely exhausted and have failed." By a more informal agreement among principals at Keene, students are not retained more than one year during their elementary years and preferably before the third grade.

Promotion, retention, acceleration and placement of students is an integral part of the process of strengthening school transitions. As these policies illustrate, school districts consider these decisions as very serious ones, possibly the most important ones affecting students' successful progress through the levels of schooling.

<u>RECOMMENDATIONS:</u>

1. Schools should have clear, comprehensive policies governing the promotion, retention, acceleration and placement of students. Criteria for these decisions should be carefully considered and applied uniformly for all students.

2. Schools should make every effort to identify potential failures as early as possible and develop action plans for students who need assistance.

3. Professional educational associations in each subject area should assist in providing standards for student achievement that could serve as a guideline for states and local districts in formulating policies on promotion, retention, acceleration, and placement.

Parents can no longer be considered on the periphery in the education of their children; they must be an integral part of the educational process. If schools are to be effective in helping all students meet their maximum potential, parent involvement programs can no longer be limited to PTA's/PTO's and Volunteer Clubs; they must go beyond the "Bake Sales."[31]

B. PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES IN STUDENT TRANSITIONS K-13

Strong articulation of students from grade to grade and school to school involves parents. This project has shown that parents make these transitions, too. The role of a parent of a kindergarten child is quite different from that of the parent of a college student. Schools need to help and encourage parents to fulfill their rightful responsibilities at each level of schooling. All of the reform reports as well as the research on effective schools have consistently and adamantly insisted that parents must play a more influential role in the education of their children. This includes, of course, an active role in supporting their children as they move through some of the troublesome transition points. When the school building, the school program, the policies and expectations change, the parents should be knowledgeable and aware of how their role will change. As a matter of fact, some of these transitions may be just as traumatic for parents as for the students, for example the transition from home to kindergarten and the transition from high school to college or work.

Schools in this project have demonstrated a great variety of ways to get parents properly involved at these key transition points.

1. Keene High School in New Hampshire, uses its parents' advisory council to assist in the transition and orientation of its incoming ninth grade class. This unique program is ambitious, and according to Charles Napoli, former principal of Keene High School, very effective and beneficial. Parents who volunteer for the "telethon" attend a workshop to received training in telephone techniques and to receive information about school programs, policies and personnel, especially those applicable to freshmen. Callers receive a format to be used in making calls and instructions for what information the school would like to obtain from each home. The calls are made in August shortly after parents receive a Parent Handbook and a program brochure printed by the

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[31]Thelma Wyatt, Principal, Metropolitan School District of Warren Township, Indianapolis

Parents' Association. Parents are invited to become active in the association and are invited to the first parents' night. In the second telethon of August, 1985, 76% of the parents of freshmen were contacted.

2. Saginaw, Michigan, requires parental participation in their unique "IEP" (Individualized Educational Plan) program as students make the transition from sixth to seventh grade and from ninth to tenth. They also involve parents in an "early intervention" program to get needed support for students who show signs of being "at-risk."

3. Chino, California, has used an automated phone system to contact and advise parents about student absences. They have organized a "Homework Club" for parents to come to school with their students in the evening hours to provide assistance with school work. Chino also sponsors "Your Futures Night" for students and parents to assist them in the transition to college, vocational schools, work, or the military.

4. Warren Township in Indianapolis has used a grant from the Eli Lilly Foundation to bring parents into a partnership with the school in aiding students in making transitions and in improving their achievement generally. Basing their plan on research data that shows that earliest intervention is the key, Warren has developed an "In-Home Tutoring Program" aimed at first-grade students who already were identified as being "at-risk."

The program objectives are (1) to provide parents the skills, methods, and techniques to assist their children to succeed in school, (2) to provide students with assistance at home in developing study skills and motivation to succeed, (3) to increase students' academic success, (4) to foster more open communication between home and school, and (5) to create a corps of parents who can pair with other parents to establish future parent-help programs. Teachers worked closely with the program but were not involved in actual tutoring. Both parents and teachers keep daily logs of how students are progressing. The teacher liaison for this program reports that "the enthusiasm of the parents and students is evidence that the program created a positive atmosphere for learning. Classroom teachers saw improvement in some of their students in a very short time." Warren schools have used the state mandated and supported summer schools as another opportunity to involve parents in helping students achieve their expected grade level in reading. A committee of teachers, administrators, parents and community business people came together to support the summer school reading program. All students had an opportunity every week to read and/or write for an adult or

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upper grade student in addition to the work with the regular classroom teacher. Students who did not have access to book collections at home were provided with books at their reading level. Parents were also involved in reading books and making cassette tapes for listening stations in the lower elementary grades. The writing activities grew quite naturally from all the activity in the summer school. The purposes and audience for writing was established for students as they confirmed appointments with their community adult or student reading partner and wrote notes of appreciation for the special help from community participants. Improving reading, writing, listening, and speaking was the goal of two hours of the summer school activity every day.

5. Gwinnett County, Georgia, has instituted a wide array of programs to involve parents in transitions, some fairly traditional, some unique. Teachers at each grade level at the J.G. Dyer Elementary School in April each year prepare a letter to parents outlining the work to be covered for the final six weeks of school and telling parents of programs in school to prepare students for their next grade level or transition to a new school. For example, the letter to fifth grade parents began,

> As the year comes to an end and we enter the final six weeks, we will continue to work on a smooth transition to Middle School. Reporters from each fifth grade class spent a day at LMS (the Middle School) on April 12 and returned to share their activities with their classmates. We visited LMS for a brief tour on April 19. Parent orientation at LMS will be there on Tuesday, May 17, at 7:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria. Counselors from the middle school will also visit students here on May 5.

The letter goes on to describe units of study in language, spelling, math, social studies, health, and science for the remainder of the school year. Similar letters were sent to parents at each grade level.

Parents of eighth graders, rising to ninth grade and the challenge of high school, were advised of transition events at Central Gwinnett High School, whose principal wrote to parents, "Undoubtedly, your student's move from middle to high school will be an exciting time for all of us. We want to assist you in making this transition as smooth as possible," and informed them of two articulation activities - registration and an orientation session for students and parents. Accompanying the letter were

publications explaining graduation requirements, freshmen course offerings, four-year planning guide, and clubs and activities for freshmen.

Gwinnett County publishes a "High School Program Guide," "The Choice Book" (a preparation and planning guide for students and parents) and for this project, with the cooperation of the local newspaper, published a special section called "A Game of Life" which went to 91% of the homes in Gwinnett County. In addition, local school advisory committees assist in acquainting parents with their schools.

6. The University of Missouri-Kansas City holds orientation meetings for parents of new students.

Schools in this project have been able to demonstrate that parent involvement in articulation is not just desirable, but necessary. For all students to achieve at their maximum potential, parents must be interested, knowledgeable, supportive and involved.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Transition programs should include parents in ways that will keep them informed and involved. Traditional orientation activities where parents sit and listen or receive publications are inadequate. Parents can and should serve on advisory committees, participate in activities with students, be involved in their students' school work, and communicate regularly with classroom teachers, counselors, and administrators.

2. Parent involvement will require parent preparation for this role. Schools and colleges should sponsor training programs for parents to help them assume the supportive parental role in assisting students in making transitions.

3. Schools should conduct surveys of parents to ascertain what parent concerns are and what knowledge about school programs and policies they have, with the goal of addressing those concerns and knowledge gaps.

In the ideal articulation model, exit level competencies are envisioned as preparing the student for the next highest level -- from vocational school through university. There would be no course repetition. Credit earned at one level would be accepted at another. Advanced placement would be available to students returning in mid-career. Both student and administration would save time, effort and money. In actuality, this happy situation has been affected only in a few instances . . .[32]

C. RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF VARIOUS PUBLICS IN STUDENT TRANSITIONS K-13

Not only are there critical transitions for students in the K-13 grades, but there are also very critical transitions for the 50% of the student population who do not continue on to post-high schooling (Grade 13) but go directly to work, to vocational training and apprenticeship, or to the military. It is at this transition point, grade 12 to career, that the business industrial and military representatives have proven to be most instrumental and helpful. Several of the project schools have created some exemplary models for school-community cooperation.

Saginaw, Michigan

In Saginaw, community involvement has been expanded in the past three (3) years. The Saginaw District is in an industrial setting, and one of declining industrial base. In 1987, in an effort to respond to the changing needs of their community, the Saginaw superintendent asked the entire staff to put their successes behind them and proceed with the task of developing a Five-Year Plan for continued school improvement. During the first five years of school improvement, Saginaw has seen test scores rise continually as they have moved toward a more building-based model of school improvement. The superintendent's directive established three task forces: elementary, junior high, and senior high. Placing the entire district under a microscope, leaders in business, industry, and the community, as well as administrators and professional staff in the school district, were asked to work together to determine new directions and initiatives as a focus of the next five years of school improvement. These task forces collectively were made up of more than 500 members from all areas of the community.

Each subject area in the senior high task force formed a 10-12 member advisory committee chaired by the subject area

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[32]Mary N. Knight, at the American Association of Community Colleges Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 25, 1983.

coordinator. Committee members represented the schools, and the business and industrial community. These committees were responsible for developing philosophy, goals, and scope and sequence for curriculum in Saginaw. The Advisory Committees remain in effect currently, meeting infrequently but serving a vital advisory capacity.

As a culminating activity, The Board of Education during the 1987-88 school year held outreach activities with the community at large. Meeting with parents at all school levels, the Board attempted to identify the community's perception of the schools, and the needs that parents and non-parents had. These outreach meetings were followed by an intensive strategic planning session, to which business leaders were invited along with professional staff members and parents. This day-long session was facilitated by a nationally recognized expert in the process. All of the attempts to involve all the stakeholders have paid dividends as Saginaw plans for education in the 21st Century.

Chino, California

In the Chino Unified School District, businesses and other civic and community organizations including the military have shown a growing interest in working with their local school districts. To mobilize these resources, Chino has strong alliances with both the United States Military and local business and industry to help build and maintain up-to-date curriculum and courses of study. As the possibility of such mutually collaborative efforts was explored, leaders in these initiatives made decisions based on understanding both the advantages of partnerships and the obstacles to developing them.

Chino sees these advantages of partnerships:

1. Support for Educational Environment
   Alliances can stimulate and support staff development, enrichment programs, basic skills projects, career education activities, and many other programmatic efforts that face restrictions or cuts because of shrinking budgets and rising costs.

2. Political Allies
   Partnerships can prove to be formidable political allies during budget time -- to counteract negativism and criticism of district spending. In fact, many temporary alliances have grown into permanent coalitions committed to the support of public funding for public schools.

3. Good Education Is Good Business
   * Partnerships reflect an understanding that the economic well-being and vitality of a community are tied to the

quality of its public school system -- and a commitment to that end.

* Partnerships can help provide human resources and shared services to extend effective and efficient pre-employment training at a lower cost per student than post-high school business retraining efforts.
* Partnerships improve public perceptions of the positive role of business in the local, regional, and national community.
* More obvious and tangible advantages of these alliances to business-community partners could range from technological training and writing institutes taught by education staff, to use of school sites, student entertainment, cultural and civic activities (art shows, landscaping, service projects, and others), English and foreign language instruction, and child-care assistance.

4. Learning Opportunities for All
Partnerships can help to extend the learning opportunities for students. Chino's alliance with the military is particularly unique and provides students with increased learning opportunities not generally available.

As positive as the effects of alliances are, Chino has discovered some obstacles to partnerships:

1) The Perception of Cost-Effectiveness
Many partnership initiatives are rejected by school districts on the basis that benefits the program would bring to the students and staff are just not worth the time and effort.

2) Competing Demands on Available Time
Competing demands on time can result in apathy and impatience toward planning and development of vital procedures and organization for creating a partnership.

Warren Township, Indiana

Community and business involvement in schools aid transitions in the Metropolitan School District of Warren Township, Indianapolis, Indiana. In the district the development of successfully articulated educational programs has been due in large part to an active advisory committee structure in vocational education.

At the Walker Career Center, which houses all vocational classes at Warren Central High School, each of the eighteen vocational programs has an advisory committee. These groups are comprised of from six to sixteen members. Most members are individuals whose careers in the community are directly related to the program for which they provide advice. Educators,

including instructors, counselors, and administrators, complete the staffing of the respective committees. The advisory committees meet formally at least once each semester; however, vocational instructors frequently contact advisory members on an informal basis as the need arises. "I feel free to contact advisory members at any time to discuss new equipment, progress in technology and student placement," says the Warren Township welding instructor.

The broad range of advisory committee functions includes providing advice in the following areas:

- Equipment - assessing need for new equipment and updating of equipment currently in use.
- Curriculum - evaluating and modifying existing curriculum to develop student skills by the current job market.
- Job placement - providing a linkage system to employment opportunities.
- Career trends - sharing insights with instructors regarding current trends and future projections.

The following chart illustrates the degree of impact of advisory contributions based on 17 vocational instructor interviews. A scale of 0-10 was used with 0 being no impact or contribution and 10 representing tremendous impact or contribution on each of the areas mentioned above.

Impact of Vocational Advisory Committees
Metropolitan School District of Warren Township

	Instructors (1-17)																	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Avg
Equipment	8	6	8	8	7	5	10	8	10	8	10	9	8	10	7	10	9	8.3
Curriculum	8	6	6	9	3	5	9	8	5	6	10	7	8	8	9	8	6	7.1
Job Placement	9	6	8	6	7	8	4	10	10	1	10	8	6	9	8	5	6	7.1
Career Trends	6	6	7	8	10	10	10	10	7	7	10	8	8	4	9	9	9	8.1

In addition, advisory members also serve as community liaisons between school and business organizations. The Marketing Education instructor and DECA sponsor, often utilizes local business members as guest speakers and judges for vocational student competitions. The industrial and vocational department chairman depends heavily upon the respective advisory committees "to keep instructors aware of the employer expectations for entry level skills required for employment."

Keene, New Hampshire

The Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce, using the motto, "Work for Us Tomorrow" will stage a Greater Keene Education and Employment Fair in cooperation with Keene High School. The fair will be held in the high school and will be open to the entire community. In addition, the hours will include the school day, making it possible for all students to visit the fair and for seniors and other students to discuss their interests and prospects with personnel directors. Space will be provided for 47 exhibitors.

The fair handbill has attracted businesses in the community by promising, ". . . opportunity to greet tomorrow's employees today, an economical and efficient way to promote your company, its employment needs and opportunities." The value placed on this opportunity by the business community is shown by their willingness to pay $150-$200 for booth space.

This project has not overlooked and will not slight in this final report the excellent school-community cooperation exemplified by the cooperative vocational education programs throughout the country. This school-community connection is an example of the kind of transitional link for students going from school to careers, and the very kind of transitional program that this project has encouraged and promoted. It was not a focus of this project since it is already a well established, successful program in all good schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Representatives from the business and industries in the community should be involved in building strong transitions between school and vocational training or careers.

2. Programs to prepare students for the transition to the world of work should begin early, both for those students who leave school before graduation and for those who enter the work place while they are still in school.

3. Business and industry representatives should advice school personnel what their long and short term needs are with the

implications for the curriculum, and the changing requirements for equipment, training, and careers.

4. The business community should be given an opportunity to feedback to the school their expectations for future employees and their evaluation of how well the school's graduates (or school leavers) are meeting their requirements.

5. Schools should establish communication channels with the community's employers to assist students in job placement. This function should be considered no less important than assisting graduates with college placement.

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

> The more we understand the process that goes into producing the desired end product the better position we are in to help improve student performance. If teachers focused on process as well as product in all grade levels, students would find ease of transition as well as continuity of learning more effectively. One of the most effective ways to narrow the gap between the student's native competence and his performance is to know where to intervene beneficially in the process. This process may be in the recursive stages of the writing or in the process of solving a math problem or in researching a science project.[33]

This demonstration project sought, over a period of three years, to improve students' school achievement by strengthening the transitions that students make during their years of schooling K-13. These troublesome transition points, generally acknowledged to be home to school, elementary to middle school or junior high, middle level school to high school, and high schools to college or career, are fraught with hurdles and stumbling blocks for many students. Students become anxious and distraught over the uncertainties of abrupt changes in buildings, teachers, classmates, and programs. Such needless anxiety and apprehension interferes with learning and impairs confidence and self-esteem.

Students making transitions need information, support and guidance and should receive it from a variety of sources. Strong school transitions require more than sending schools saying "Goodbye and good luck!" and receiving schools saying, "Hello, we're glad to see you!" Such perfunctory good wishes and greetings fall far short of the strong processes that can help students through these transitions without interruptions, delays, or detours.

The seven demonstration centers have devised and implemented literally dozens of programs to strengthen school transitions for students K-13. Some of these have been highly original and innovative. They have been combined with those that are more standard and traditional. All of these efforts have been in the interest of improving student achievement, a clear and imperative goal for everyone in education.

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[33]Harold E. Nugent, language arts professor, Keene State University and Cynthia Prill Buffum, pre-school teacher, Keene, New Hampshire.

As pointed out in the introduction of this final report, all of the results are not in, since the product of these efforts cannot be known for some time. Nevertheless, the participants submit that the accomplishments in their schools on behalf of their students, will reap returns that will strengthen the entire school continuum K-13. This project was able to accomplish all of the following:

1. Establish the relation between strong transitions and good school achievement.

2. Identify the critical transition points.

3. Define the challenges and problems that students encounter in making school transitions.

4. Determine the expectations, academic, emotional, and social, for students at each level of schooling.

5. Devise support systems for all students as they make transitions.

6. Develop special support services for students "at risk" in making transitions.

7. Create and implement a great variety of provisions and programs for strengthening school transitions, including:

    a. Administrative and guidance services.
    b. Mechanisms for communicating essential information about students and schools, both forward and back.
    c. Agreements and arrangements to formalize transitions to coordinate curriculum and services between high schools and colleges.
    d. Programs using students to assist students in making successful transitions.

8. Plan K-13 curriculum that insures continuity, consistency, comprehensiveness, and valid assessment.

9. Use decision-making processes that involve all appropriate parties, students, teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, and community members.

10. Use processes that emphasize strong communication, cooperation, consensus, and finally, commitment.

11. Establish responsibilities for all phases of the transition process, from Boards of Education to all levels of staff, to parents and community members to students.

12. Put in place policies and procedures to insure that transition activities will be perpetuated into the future.

13. Train and prepare the professional staff to assume their responsibilities for the transition process.

14. Involve parents and the community appropriately in the transition process.

During the three project years, efforts were concentrated primarily in the seven demonstration centers. With the publication of this final report, the project is sharing its experience and its findings with schools throughout the country. Recommendations which appear at the conclusion of each section will provide schools with specific program goals to improve student achievement by strengthening transitions K-13.

Contact Persons

Chino - Mary Louise Labrucherie, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services
Chino Unified School District
5130 Riverside Drive
Chino, California 91710

Gwinnett - Sandra Webb, Lead Teacher
Cedar Hill Elementary School
550 Huston Road
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30245

Kansas City - Earl R. Jones, Mathematics Coordinator, K-12
School District of Kansas City, Missouri
1211 McGee Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Keene - Richard Larcom, Principal
Keene High School
43 Arch Street
Keene, New Hampshire 03431

Okmulgee - Zenobia Jones, Curriculum Coordinator
Okmulgee High School
3rd and Alabama
Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447

Saginaw - Burris Smith, Director of Instruction, K-12
School District of the City of Saginaw
550 Millard
Saginaw, Michigan 48607

Warren - Betty Poindexter, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Metropolitan School District of Warren Township
9301 E. 18th Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46229

APPENDIX A

"STRENGTHENING SCHOOL TRANSITIONS FOR STUDENTS K-13"

A Three-Year NASSP Project: 1985-1988

Seven Demonstration Centers

Location	Community Characteristics	Schools Involved	Project Director	Target Subjects	Special Project Activities
1. Chino, California Contact Person: Mary Louise Labrucherie	Chino - Rapidly growing Southern California community - 500 new students each year - 20,000 students total. Multi-cultural population. Bedroom community rapidly becoming urban. Has been dairy farm capital of California.	All Schools plus Local colleges Military	Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services	. Language Arts . Mathematics . Science . Social Science . Foreign Language	. Strong Superintendent and School Board Support . Eight (8) Curriculum Coordinators . Auxiliary Programs . Compensating teachers for writing curriculum . Outcomes, activities . Performance based assessments in foreign language . Courses of study developed in five academic areas
2. Gwinnett County, Georgia Contact Person: Sandra Webb	Atlanta suburb, fastest growing county in the U.S. (Gains equivalent of one classroom a day.) 60,000 students. Elementary, middle, and high schools all recognized as National Schools of Excellence.	Cluster of schools feeding Central Gwinnett High plus Local colleges	Principal of Central Gwinnett High School and Dyer Elementary School Lead Teacher	. Mathematics . Language Arts	. Seven working committees, including three transition committees . "Benchmarks": Standards of learning . Use of policies and procedures for promotion, retention and placement . Computer managed curriculum program Student transition activity
3. Kansas City, Missouri Contact Person: Earl Jones	Large urban school district with high minority enrollment in inner city. Problems typical of all large city schools. Organizing magnet schools to achieve desegregation.	Southwest cluster of schools plus Local colleges	Coordinator of Mathematics	. Mathematics	. Three committees - Steering - Implementation - Curriculum Development . K-13 meeting . "Feedback": Longitudinal study using information from counselors

"STRENGTHENING SCHOOL TRANSITIONS FOR STUDENTS K-13"

A Three-Year NASSP Project: 1985-1988

Seven Demonstration Centers

Location	Community Characteristics	Schools Involved	Project Director	Target Subjects	Special Project Activities
4. Keene, New Hampshire Contact Person: Richard Larcom	Self-contained city of 25,000. Economic center of Cheshire County. Home of Keene State College. Steady population growth. Recognized for excellent public school system.	One high school district-involves all schools plus Local colleges	Principal of the High School	. Language Arts . Mathematics	. Using already established skills continuums . Comprehensive testing program . Governor's Initiative-Teacher personal computer for record keeping, tracking students and making dittoes, etc.
5. Okmulgee, Oklahoma Contact Person: Zenobia Jones	Small, self-contained town with 2,600 students. Multi-racial makeup. Large Native American population. Enrollment declining in a distressed economic area.	All schools plus Local college	Principal of High School and Curriculum Coordinator	. Language Arts (Year 1) . Math (Year 4) . Science and Social Science (Year 5)	. Small school district with diverse populations . Sequential set of learning objectives - "must", "should", "optional" . Learning activities and teaching methods . Evaluation system to determine objectives mastery . Intense local interest and media coverage
6. Saginaw, Michigan Contact Person: Burris Smith	Industrial city of 80,000 with stabilized student population of 17,000 over 50% minority. A "G.M." city, but industrial base declining. Approximately 25% of adults have school-age children.	Career Opportunities Center plus Local Colleges --- K-1: "Young Fives" plus "Junior First"	Principal of Career Center and Director of Instruction K-12	. Vocational Education . Language Arts . Mathematics . Science . Social Science . Music, Art	. Ten Vocational Education areas . Define skills and competencies needed . Infusion of academic competencies . Credit for high school experience --- . Concern for readiness . EPSF (Early Prevention of Student Failure) . Hire seven curriculum coordinators

"STRENGTHENING SCHOOL TRANSITIONS FOR STUDENTS K-13"

A Three-Year NASSP Project: 1985-1988

Seven Demonstration Centers

ocation	Community Characteristics	Schools Involved	Project Director	Target Subjects	Special Project Activities
. Warren Township, Indianapolis, Indiana Contact Person: Betty Poindexter	Middle to upper class Indianapolis suburban district with a stable enrollment of 9,500. High school nationally recognized. Outstanding facilities. K-12 subject coordinators and instructional improvement teams.	All schools plus Local colleges	Director of Curriculum and Instruction	. Mathematics . Science	. Indiana University "feedback": exchange information about student progress and success . Steering committee-involve all school personnel . Performance indicators (assessment)-instructional strategies . Foundation providing funds for released time . Communication Decision Making Model that promotes and sustains change . Inservice program-"Teachers Teaching Teachers"

APPENDIX B

The Wingspread Colloquium

In March of 1984, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the American Council on Education and the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, all national professional educational associations concerned with the quality of education in the United States, took the initiative to convene a group of prominent, influential educators and interested lay people to address the problems of the "school-college connection." Specifically this conference sought recommendations and remedies to the persistent and pervasive problems of poor preparation of secondary school students for college. The examination of this critical and highly publicized transition point in some students' educational experience brought attention to bear on such subjects as academic preparation for college, college admissions policies, appropriateness of college admissions tests, college expectations, and the adequacy of communication between the colleges and secondary schools.

The conference, held at the Wingspread Conference Center in Racine, Wisconsin[34] attracted some 45 influential leaders, nine of whom prepared and presented papers on various aspects of the topic. The three sponsoring associations were represented by their officers and executives, along with spokespersons and representatives of such organizations as the National Institute of Education, Educational Testing Service, American College Testing Program, The College Board, National Association of College Admissions Counselors, and The Association of Governing Boards. Also present were reporters and editors from Education Week, New York Times, Education USA, and The Chronicle of Higher Education. These papers, along with comments and recommendations rising from the subsequent group discussions, were published by the NASSP.[35]

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[34] Sponsors and hosts were the Johnson Foundation, Boards of Universities and Colleges, American Association of School Administrators, and several individual secondary schools and universities.

[35] The School-College Connection, Relations and Standards, reprinted from, NASSP Bulletin, Vol. 68, No. 473, 1984, 85 pages

APPENDIX C

The Proposal for Funding of a Three-Year Project

Using the impetus of the Wingspread Conference and on the suggestion of the participants, the NASSP, through the initiative of Douglas Hunt, associate executive director, prepared a proposal for a three-year funded project "to establish a series of demonstration centers that could serve as models for school systems throughout the country...to encourage them to develop an achievement based set of integrated curriculum standards K-16." The proposal pointed out that "The U.S. educational system is unique in that it is not a system, but rather 15,000 local school systems, each responsible for curriculum content and standards." The only transition point, the proposal states, where achievement levels are established is for college-bound students applying to enter higher education. The proposal maintained that "Any reform of American education, if it is to achieve an impact and have lasting results, must address the full span K-16 and must state desired outcomes in qualitative as opposed to the more traditionally stated quantitative terms." Since ninety percent of our students continue their education through the 12th grade, and fifty percent beyond, a project to improve student achievement through this entire continuum was proposed.

The William and Mary Greve Foundation of New York accepted the proposal and agreed to funding for the three-year period. Irving Becker, executive vice president of the Foundation, participated in the final formulation of the project design and has continued as a member of the project steering committee for the duration of the project. His active participation, encouragement and support was a valuable resource during the project period.

The final project design set the focus on grades K-13, recognizing that the transition into college was a critical point to improve, but that the remaining college years were beyond the scope of the project.

In addition to the National Association of Secondary School Principals, which initiated the project proposal and committed administrative personnel, expertise and additional funds, two professional education associations joined in as "cooperating" agencies. These have been the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) and the National Association of College Admissions Counselors (NACAC).

APPENDIX D

Steering Committee Formulates Plans

A steering committee was formed to set the goals of the project, establish timelines, and select the demonstration centers. The steering committee has been chaired by Leo Sweeney, past president of AACRAO, with Douglas Hunt, associate executive director of NASSP, Douglas Conner, executive director of AACRAO, Pamela Fay, past president of NACAC, their executive director Charles Marshall (later replaced by Frank Burtnett), Irving Becker, executive vice president of the Greve Foundation, and Gilbert Weldy, national project director.

APPENDIX E

Project Objectives

Subsequently, the "problems and issues" list was translated into more specific goals for the project with an outline of the means to be used in achieving the project goals.

1. Improve student achievement and performance at all levels of schooling by strengthening all means of articulation in curriculum and student progress from one level to another through grades K-13. To achieve this objective, these means will be utilized in the demonstration center schools:

   a. Involve appropriate staff in all participating schools at all levels in setting goals, planning improvement activities, and assessing results.
   b. Improve and strengthen the channels of communication and collaboration between and among classroom teachers, curriculum supervisors, and counselors at all levels of schooling.
   c. Improve the understandings and consensus among classroom teachers and curriculum supervisors for sequence and continuity of curriculum content at all levels.
   d. Define expectations and standards more clearly for the transition of students from one level to another, basing these standards not so much upon time spent or credits earned but on specific content, knowledge, skills development, and concept mastery. The goal will be to define student achievement in terms of qualitative standards rather than quantitative measures.
   e. Encourage and support all means of strengthening preparation of students in order for them to succeed at the next level of schooling.
   f. Develop the most appropriate and reliable measures of student performance and utilize them to evaluate program content, methods and materials.

g. Develop and promote means of communicating strengths and/or gaps and deficiencies in student preparation and achievement from each higher level school to the lower level "sending" school.
h. Improve procedures for placing students in the most appropriate programs at each level of schooling, with accurate identification of needs for remediation or opportunities for acceleration or enrichment.
i. Strengthen linkages, communication, and sharing between schools and colleges.

2. Concentrate efforts on the seven demonstration center groups in achieving these objectives.

3. Provide opportunities for project demonstration center schools to share information with each other and to build on the strengths of each school's articulation program.

4. During the course of the three-year project, publish and disseminate the findings and the outcomes of the project's efforts in each school community involved in the project and in schools generally across the nation. Report annually to the conventions of the three cooperating national organizations.

APPENDIX F

Criteria for Selection of Seven Demonstration Centers

The steering committee set forth criteria for the selection of the seven demonstration centers as follows:

1. Each Demonstration Center must include:

a. A large university and a junior or community college which admits a large number of graduates from the participating high school(s).
b. One or two high schools in the same school district which have not less than sixty percent of their graduates going on to post high school study.
c. Two or three underlying middle level schools that send their students to the participating high schools.
d. Three to five underlying elementary schools that send their students to the participating middle level schools.

2. The participating schools should be in close proximity, although the participating university may be some distance away, but in the same state. Preference will be given to schools which are convenient for travel and working relationships.

3. One of the demonstration centers may be a network of private or independent schools as described in one and two above.

4. Participating schools will cooperatively appoint an active high level administrator (principal or above) to serve as a director of the demonstration center. A principal, district supervisor or college dean would be an appropriate person. The director should be available for two annual meetings of the demonstration center directors, one possibly in conjunction with the annual convention of the NASSP. (Some funds will be available from the Foundation grant for this travel.)

5. Demonstration centers should be geographically distributed throughout the country. (Possibly representing the seven regions of NASSP governance or the regional accrediting agencies.)

6. Each demonstration center will provide administrative time, clerical and duplicating service, and travel and communication (telephone) expense. (Each project demonstration center will receive $2500.00 annually from the Foundation grant to help meet these costs.)

7. Each demonstration center will agree to participate fully and contribute actively the time and resources needed to do all of the following--but not limited to these criteria:

a. Agree to study and improve the process of articulation between each level of schooling, using the advice and counsel of the project advisors/consultants.
b. Involve teaching and supervisory staff in developing content-oriented exit and entry level knowledge and skills (standards) in at least one basic subject area (language arts, mathematics, science, or social studies).
c. Develop and agree upon standards and expectations for transition from one level of schooling to the next with the appropriate means to define and measure these standards (testing).
d. Establish formal procedures for communicating student performance and achievement back to the sending school(s).
e. Devise and build in a system of evaluation for this process to determine the readiness and preparation of students for moving from one level to the next and identifying areas where there may be gaps or overlaps in student learning.
f. Improve the counseling process for both students and their parents so that education and career guidance begins at an early stage and provides appropriate information and resources to support the counseling function.

8. Each demonstration center will make the commitment to change for the betterment of the educational process K-13.

APPENDIX G

Demonstration Centers Selected

Through the NASSP's Newsleader and by solicitation through other NASSP channels and the regional accrediting agencies, school districts were invited to apply for demonstration center participation. Over 40 districts made inquiries, and 21 followed up with full applications. The following seven centers were selected by the steering committee in the summer of 1985. All seven have continued as full participating members for the duration of the project.

CHINO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT, Chino, California
Project Director - Mary Louise Labruchie, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services

All Chino Schools with California State Polytechnic University, Chaffey Community College, The Claremont Colleges, University of California Riverside

Targeted Subjects - Language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language

GWINNETT COUNTY SCHOOLS, Lawrenceville, Georgia
Project Directors - Edith Belden, Principal, Central Gwinnett High School
Sandra Wells, Instructional Lead Teacher, Dyer Elementary School

Schools in the Central Gwinnett High School attendance area with Gainesville Junior College, Gwinnett Area Tech, University of Georgia

Targeted Subjects: Mathematics and language arts

KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
Project Director - Ellen Landess, Coordinator of Elementary Mathematics

Schools in the Southwest High School cluster with University of Missouri at Kansas City, Penn Valley Community College

Targeted Subject - Mathematics

KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Project Director - Charles Napoli, Principal, Keene High School

All Keene Schools with Keene State College, University of New Hampshire at Durham

Targeted Subjects - Language arts and mathematics

OKMULGEE, OKLAHOMA
Project Directors - John Shinpoch, Principal, Okmulgee High School
Zenobia Jones, Curriculum Coordinator and Counselor

All Okmulgee Schools with Oklahoma State University at Stillwater and Oklahoma State University

Technical Branch in Okmulgee

SAGINAW, MICHIGAN
Project Directors - John Paar, Principal and Director of Vocational Education, Averill Career Opportunities Center
Burris Smith, Director of Instruction, K-12

Saginaw Secondary Schools particularly the Averill Career Opportunities Center with Delta Community College, Saginaw Valley State College, and Great Lakes Junior College

Targeted subjects - all vocational subjects

METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WARREN TOWNSHIP, Indianapolis, Indiana
Project Director - Betty Poindexter, Director of Curriculum and Instruction

All Warren Township Schools with Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana University and Purdue University at Indianapolis

Targeted Subjects - Mathematics, science, language arts

These demonstration centers represented different size schools, different areas of the country, different ethnic and racial populations, and different kinds of problems. One attribute held in common was their willingness to commit time, resources, and personnel to the project for the three-year period.

APPENDIX H

"Consulting" School Districts

Another group of school districts which could not be used as demonstration centers agreed to serve as "consulting" districts and possibly to step in as a demonstration center if any of the seven could not continue. These districts all had

strong experience in articulation activities and agreed to share this experience with the demonstration centers.

Four districts that shared experience at project meetings were the Niles Township High Schools in Skokie, Illinois; Stevens Point, Wisconsin; Cherry Creek School District, Denver, Colorado; and Cedar Falls Community Schools, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

APPENDIX I

Plan for Carrying out Project Objectives

In August, 1985, a plan of operation was formulated by project participants in their first meeting together in Reston, Virginia, at the NASSP headquarters building. In addition to the seven demonstration directors, steering committee members and project consultants helped to finalize the project objectives (cited earlier). The first year of the project was for planning, the second year for implementation, and the third for evaluation.

Twice each year, the project group planned to meet together to share experiences and to report progress, once in conjunction with the annual NASSP Convention and once during each summer. This plan for meetings was carried out with each demonstration center represented by the center director and occasionally by other local project participants.

The steering committee also selected several educators to serve as consultants. Dr. Mary Diez, Education Department Chair at Alverno College in Milwaukee assisted centers in planning for assessment of their programs, and Pamela Fay, Director of Studies at St. Catherine's School in Richmond, Virginia, provided advice concerning guidance and counseling programs. In addition, the national project director served as consultant in all aspects of the project and visited each demonstration center at least twice.

APPENDIX J

DELTA CONSORTIUM ARTICULATION PROGRAM
INTERINSTITUTIONAL ARTICULATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN DELTA COLLEGE AND PARTICIPATING SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

Articulation is the systematic coordination between educational agencies designed to ensure efficient and effective progress of students among those agencies, while guaranteeing successive learning and advancement.

The purpose of this agreement intends to enable a relationship between secondary vocational education programs and Delta College occupational education programs such that graduates of the former may receive academic recognition for competencies they have achieved in certain agreed-upon tasks equivalent to Delta College articulated courses.

BENEFITS

** Closer secondary and post-secondary curriculum coordination and communication.

** Reduced educational costs for eligible students.

** Reduced duplication of training and time spent taking courses in which the eligible student has demonstrated competencies.

** Recognition of students via credit and course advancements for skills achieved in vocational programs in high school.

SIGNATORIES

We, the undersigned representatives of the participating education institutions, agree to the conditions and procedures written herein in this agreement for a period of two (2) full years.

_____

School representatives sign here

CONDITIONS

For a period of two full years, beginning with the Delta College academic year of 1983-84 and concluding with the Delta College academic year of 1984-85, the following conditions and procedures concerning articulation will be in effect:

I. GRANTING OF DELTA COLLEGE ARTICULATION CREDIT

A. Delta College agrees to grant appropriate college credit in a manner consistent with its policies to completers of secondary vocational programs from those institutions who are signatories to this agreement. The student will meet the following requirements:

1. Meet necessary prerequisites established by the college.
2. Be certified by the vocational program teacher(s) as having mastered the agreed upon tasks and criteria equivalent to the Delta articulated course.
3. Enroll in a similar Delta curriculum within one full year (12 months) of high school graduation or vocational program completion. Students lapsing more than 12 months should take credit by examination. Additional time will be allowed for nursing students since prerequisite course completion may take slightly longer than 12 months.
4. Dependent upon the articulated content area, articulated credit will be granted to eligible students via one of the three articulation mechanisms below:

a. Enroll in the course which is next in the program sequence and achieve a minimum grade of C. Once the C grade is achieved for the next program course, credit for the articulated course and the enrolled course will be recorded on the college transcript.

Content Area

Drafting
Building Trades
Machine Tools
Nursing
Office Education

b. Take a competency test based upon tasks and criteria equivalent to the Delta course and achieve an evaluation of C before credit is recorded.

c. Attend an agreed upon portion of the articulated Dental Assisting in which it is determined and agreed that articulating students have not achieved all of the Delta course objectives. (In this situation, the student attends lecture classes, completes tests and assignments with a minimum grade of C, and waives attendance in laboratory practice sessions.)

II. MANAGEMENT TEAM

The parties to this agreement will support the articulation program and its Management Team by designating representatives to the team.

Articulation program operations, policies, and procedures will be monitored by the Delta Consortium Articulation Management Team comprised of secondary and post-secondary vocational educational personnel. An executive council of the Management Team, comprised of three local district members and the Occupational Dean, will provide leadership to the Management Team.

III. ARTICULATION AGREEMENT AND REVISION

A. During each academic year, an Articulation Update will be scheduled for each occupational area for the purpose of review, revision, modification and evaluation of the curriculum agreements and the master Interinstitutional Articulation Agreement. All teachers and counselors of secondary and post-secondary occupational/vocational-technical programs will be invited to provide input for review and revision and receive new information.

B. During each academic year, a review of the Articulation Agreement and process will be conducted. All local agency administrative personnel will provide input for necessary review and revision.

C. A signatory to the Articulation Agreement may discontinue participation in total or in part by submitting written notice to the Occupational Dean, Delta College. Written notice should be made at least three months prior to the end of the academic year to adequately inform students.

D. Upon recommendation of this Articulation Project Management Team, program areas may be added to, or deleted from, Condition IV of the agreement upon mutual consent of all parties of the agreement.

V. PROGRAM OPERATIONS

A. The signatories to this agreement commit themselves to its support by providing for the necessary participation of their appropriate staff in the following activities:

1. Teach an agreed upon, minimum, set of tasks and criteria.
2. Instruct and counsel students about the articulation program.
3. Recommend students as candidates for articulation credit.
4. Participate in annual meetings for the purpose of review and update.

APPENDIX K

LAWRENCEVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

SENTENCE COMPLETION

1. At LMS I was assigned to a partner in _____homeroom.
2. One thing that is different in middle school is _____.
   _____.
3. My favorite thing about LMS is _____.
4. Classes in middle school are _____.
5. One thing I never knew about middle school was _____
   _____.
6. Lunch at LMS was _____.
7. The classes I attended at LMS included _____
   _____.
8. The exploratory classes in middle school _____
   _____.
9. Physical education at LMS _____
   _____.
10. The _____ in middle school helps students with their problems.
11. _____ and _____ are music classes for students who want to learn to play a musical instrument.
12. An _____ course is six weeks long.

WORD LIST

Groups	Counselor	Band
Science	Reading	Math
English	Social Studies	Art
Spelling	Strings	P.E.
Business	Home Arts	Music
Exploratory	Computer Science	

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MY DAY AT LAWRENCEVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL

When I arrived at _____, I met the _____ and the _____. They talked with the Shadow Program students about _____ school and assigned each of us to a sixth grade partner. My partner's name was _____ and he/she was in _____ homeroom.

A team is a group of teachers who teach the _____ classes. These subjects include _____, Social Studies, _____, and Math. While at Lawrenceville, I visited in _____, _____, and _____ classes.

In middle school, you have academic and _____ classes. Exploratory classes include _____, band, business, _____, _____, and music. I visited in the _____ class during exploratory time. The students in this class were _____.

Physical education is required in middle school for all students. The _____ classes meet in the gym and outside on the field.

In middle school you eat lunch in the _____. Lunch is different because _____.

Lawrenceville is different from our school because _____
_____. The sixth grade
students _____.

All in all, my day at Lawrenceville was _____.
The thing I enjoyed the most was _____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

(Finish the story by writing at least five (5) more sentences about your day in middle school.)

Appendix L
Transitional Activities Calendar
Elementary to Middle/Junior High School

Month	Gwinnett County, Georgia
August	Open house prior to opening day of school
September	Fall meeting with parents of sixth grade students Coffees for parents of sixth grade students
November	Feedback from middle school to elementary school on the accuracy of placements from previous year.
January	County-wide work day to provide a structured forum for exchange of ideas between fifth grade and sixth grade teachers/counselors/instructional lead teachers (1/2 day) including special education to discuss fifth and sixth grade curriculum, plan for orientation, and discuss needs of students in specific curricular areas.
February	Develop or revise a student handbook specifically designed for the needs of rising sixth graders to be distributed at/before spring orientation by individual schools. Suggestions for student handbook: 1. Letter from principal and staff 2. Staff roster (Leadership Team, Counselors) 3. Poem 4. Advice from students (sixth grade) 5. Fifth grade fears/concerns 6. School trivia 7. School facts a. Rules b. Curriculum c. Extracurricular activities for sixth graders d. School hours, phone number, address e. Map of school Develop or revise a handbook at individual schools for the parents of rising sixth graders which would include information regarding the developmental stages of adolescence and information regarding middle school curriculum.

Month	Gwinnett County, Georgia
February continued	Suggestions for parent handbook: 1. Welcome letter from principal and staff 2. Nature of the middle school learner (stages of development) 3. School facts a. Curriculum b. Extracurricular activities for sixth graders c. Staff roster (Leadership Team and Counselors) d. Map e. School hours, phone number, etc. f. Rules 4. Study tips 5. Bibliography of adolescent readings
March	Schedule orientations for rising sixth grade students.
	Plan orientation
April	Middle school principal meets with rising sixth grade parents at elementary school
May	Pre-orientation classes for rising sixth graders
	Fifth grade students spend a day in the middle school and report back to peers
	Peer leaders visit elementary schools to meet with rising sixth graders
	Orientation meeting at the middle school for rising sixth graders
	Meeting with parents of rising sixth graders at the middle school
	Post-orientation classes for rising sixth graders
	Complete information card on each child for transition to middle school
	Provide special education information to middle school instructional lead teachers
June	Transfer records from elementary to middle school according to county published guidelines

APPENDIX M

GWINNETT COUNTY
PROMOTION/RETENTION/ACCELERATION/PLACEMENT

PROCEDURES

These procedures govern the promotion, retention, acceleration and placement of students who are enrolled in Special Education classes.

I. PROMOTION AND RETENTION

A. Elementary and Middle Schools

1. Promotion of students annually is desirable

2. Retention for elementary and middle school students shall conform to the following unless extenuating circumstances prevail.

- Students in the elementary and middle schools may be retained when the following circumstances exist:

- Retention should occur at lowest grade level possible, preferably at first or second grade.

- No student shall be retained in Kindergarten or Readiness.

- No student shall be retained more than once in the elementary grades.

- No student who has attended Readiness shall be retained in the elementary grades.

- No student shall be retained more than once in the middle grades.

a. Every effort shall be made to identify potential retainees as early as possible during the academic school year. In all instances an initial parent/teacher conference shall be held no later than February 1 of the current academic school year. At this conference, an attempt should be made to develop a plan of action to correct the identified deficiencies.

b. A second parent/teacher/principal (or designee) conference must be held no later than April 15 to discuss the student's progress. If it

appears that retention is to be recommended, the following factors must be considered in relation to the student's grade placement for the following academic school year.

1) Academic achievement in all subject areas, especially basic skill mastery, as determined by tests and/or teachers' judgment.

2) Chronological age.

3) Mental ability as determined by test and/or teacher's judgments.

4) Work and study habits.

5) Physical development.

6) Social maturity/peer relationships/adult relationships.

7) Emotional maturity/impact on self concept.

8) Degree of initiative and effort demonstrated.

9) Attendance record.

10) Availability of remedial resources.

11) Placement of siblings.

c. A committee composed of the student's teacher, principal or designee and others deemed necessary will recommend retention and complete a Retention Form. A conference should be held with the parents to obtain their signature and to address any parent concerns.

d. The responsibility of notifying parents of the school's recommendation of retention is the principal's.

e. <u>Appeals:</u>

1) Should the school retention recommendation conflict with parent wishes, the case may be appealed to the Associate Superintendent for Instruction. The Retention Appeals Form should by used in making appeals. The Associate Superintendent then will make a decision regarding the appeal. Conferencing and notifying the parents of the appeal's

decision is the responsibility of the Associate Superintendent for Instruction.

2) In unusual circumstances, parents may further appeal the retention of their student to the Superintendent.

3) In situations where the parents and the school system cannot agree, the parents may sign a waiver to permit their child to be placed according to parent wishes.

f. Retention Involving Two School Levels: Should retention involve two school levels, the Associate Superintendent for Instruction will convene a special hearing attended by himself, appropriate school directors, the principals involved, and others deemed necessary. Conferencing with and notifying the parents is the responsibility of the Associate Superintendent's.

g. The Retention Recommendation Form shall be filed in the student's Standard Educational Record. If used the Retention Appeals Form should also be filed in this record.

h. When a student is retained, his/her instructional program should be modified to accommodate his/her individual needs. An IEP prescribing the program of a retained student should be on file.

B. High School

1. Promotion and retention for high school students shall conform to the following hours required for promotion to the next grade:

Grade 9 to 10	65	(35)*	Grade placement
Grade 10 to 11	145	(75)*	shall be made
Grade 11 to 12	220	(115)*	annual at the beginning of the Fall Quarter
Graduation	300	(150)	

*Must be in subjects required by the State Board of Education.

2. Every effort shall be made by each teacher to identify students who have difficulty passing a course.

a. If during the first ten (10) days of a quarter the teacher questions the appropriateness of a student's placement, schedule adjustments should be made.
b. If it becomes apparent midway through the reporting period that the student may fail, the teacher of the course shall make at least one phone or written contact with the parent.

II. ACCELERATION: Advancing a student to the next highest grade level or skipping a grade.

A. Acceleration within One School Level

1. Parents and teachers may initiate a written request to the principal for acceleration of a student.

2. The student should be achieving at least two years above grade level in all major subject areas to be considered for acceleration. An example of a student achieving two years above grade level is a fourth grade student able to do sixth grade work.

3. A school committee composed of the student's teacher, principal, and others deemed necessary will make a recommendation regarding acceleration and complete an Acceleration/Placement Recommendation Form. A conference with the parents to address parent concerns should be held.

4. The responsibility of notifying parents of the recommendation is the principal's.

5. Appeals:

(Same as for Promotion and Retention.)

B. Acceleration Between School Levels (Elementary to Middle; Middle to High)

1. Parents or teachers may initiate a written request to the principal for acceleration of a student.

2. The student should be achieving at least two years above grade level in the areas to be considered for acceleration.
3. When acceleration involves two school levels, the appropriate school directors will convene a hearing attended by themselves, principals involved and others deemed necessary. The following factors will be considered in making this decision.

a. The student's social/emotional readiness for inter-school acceleration,
b. The student's compatibility of physical size, with other students and,
c. The student's academic readiness for inter-school acceleration.

4. Appeals

(Same as for Promotion and Retention.)

5. The Acceleration/Retention Recommendation Form shall be filed in the student's Standard Education Record. If used, the Acceleration/Placement Appeals Form should be filed in this record.

C. If at any time it becomes evident that it would be in the best interest of the student to be returned to their prior grade level or school, the principal shall make the recommendation to the appropriate school director for action.

III. PLACEMENT

In special circumstances the school may recommend that students be placed at the next highest grade level.

A. Placement may occur at any time during the year; however, preferably it will occur at the beginning of the school year.

B. A parent/teacher/principal (or designee) conference must be held to discuss the student's circumstances.

C. The variables that must be considered for placement of a student are:

(Same as Promotion and Retention.)

D. A committee composed of the student's teacher, principal or designee and others deemed necessary will recommend placement and complete the Acceleration/ Placement Form. A conference should be held with the parents to obtain their signature and to address any parent concerns.

E. The responsibility of notifying parents of the schools recommendation of placement is the principal's.

F. Appeals

(Same as for Promotion and Retention.)

IV. RETENTION OF HANDICAPPED STUDENTS

Students who are placed in any handicapped class (EMH, THM, etc.) shall not be retained unless prior approval is given by the Department of Special Education.

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GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ACCELERATION/PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATION FORM
FOR
ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOLS

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

NAME OF STUDENT: _____

AGE: _____ BIRTHDATE: _____ CONFERENCE DATE: _____

LOCAL SCHOOL:

_____ is recommended for acceleration/
(student name)

placement in the _____ grade for the _____ academic year.

_____ I agree to the acceleration/placement of my child.
_____ I disagree to the acceleration/placement of my child.

_____ _____
Parent's Signature Date

COMMENTS:

FINAL ACTION TAKEN: (to be completed in parent conference)

_____ is placed in the _____ grade
for the _____ school year.

_____ _____
Teacher's Signature Date

_____ _____
Principal's Signature Date

Please check:

_____ School Recommendation Appealed to Associate Superintendent for Instruction.

A copy of this form must be filed in the Standard Educational Record

white copy - parent
yellow copy - Standard Educational Record

GWINNETT COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RETENTION RECOMMENDATION FORM
FOR
ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOLS

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

NAME OF STUDENT: _____

AGE: _____ BIRTHDATE: _____ CONFERENCE DATE: _____

LOCAL SCHOOL:

_____ is recommended for placement in the _____
(student name)
grade for the _____academic year.

_____ I agree to the retention of my child.
_____ I disagree to the retention of my child.

_____ _____
Parent's Signature Date

COMMENTS:

FINAL ACTION TAKEN: (to be completed in parent conference)

_____ is placed in the _____ grade
for the _____ school year.

_____ _____
Teacher's Signature Date

_____ _____
Principal's Signature Date

Please check:

_____ School Recommendation Appealed to Associate Superintendent For Instruction.

A copy of this form must be filed in the Standard Educational Record.

White copy - parent
Yellow copy - Standard Educational Record